

THE EASTFORD Communicator



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2024

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

VOL. 33, No. 2

2024 ELECTION



Jeff Gordon



Merry Garrett

In preparation for the election on Nov. 5, the Communicator has prepared an election preview for the contested 35th State Senate District race between incumbent Sen. Jeff Gordon (R) and challenger Merry Garrett (D), in the form of a questionnaire. Turn to pages 6-7 for complete coverage, and do not forget to vote on Tuesday, Nov. 5, between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. at the Town Office Building!

BACK TO SCHOOL!



Courtesy photos

EASTFORD — Eastford Elementary School kicked off the school year on Wednesday, Aug. 28, and to celebrate the beginning of another year, the Communicator put out the call to Eastford parents to send us photos of their children on their first day of school! At left, Keagan Murphy started his second-grade year with this prop-filled photo. At right, the Moore sisters took a second to smile for the camera before setting off for their first day of school. Anna, left, started her first-grade year, while Grace started her third-grade year. For more photos, turn to page 8!

Ashford Road bridge project slated for '27

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

EASTFORD — The bridge over Bigelow Brook on Ashford Road has stood firm since 1937. In 2027, 90 years after it first was constructed, it will finally be replaced.

At a meeting on Tuesday, July 16, The CT Department of Transportation (CT DOT) held an informational meeting for the public, detailing the upcoming project that will give a much-needed update to a bridge that has far outlived its service life.

According to CT DOT Supervising Engineer and Project Manager Marc Byrnes, funding for the \$4.41-million, "Design Managed by State" (DMS) project will come from the Federal

Turn to **BRIDGE**, pg. 27

Auction event to fund upcoming D.C. trip

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

EASTFORD — Eastford Elementary School's annual Washington D.C. field trip for eighth graders has become a tradition that dates back at least three decades, and if the Eastford School Auction Committee has its way, it will be a tradition that continues for many more years to come.

Every May, eighth-grade students are whisked away via coach bus for a four-day field trip that includes educational sightseeing, delving into the history of the



Courtesy photo

United States of America. Martin Luther King Jr. Locations such as the Memorial, Ford's Theater, Washington Monument, the and Arlington National Lincoln Memorial, the Cemetery, among many other Jefferson Memorial, the sights, are regularly featured. World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam memorials,

Turn to **AUCTION**, pg. 26

IN
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ISSUE



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HOST 'SPORTS
CAMP'
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THE EASTFORD Communicator

LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1992

VOL. 33, No. 2 | OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2024

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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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).

Recycling guidelines outlined by selectmen

EASTFORD — The Town of Eastford contracts with Casella Waste Systems in Willimantic, CT, for hauling and disposal of trash and recyclables from the Transfer Station. Casella offers significant municipal rebates for clean cardboard. In addition, the elimination of clean cardboard from Eastford's general household trash will reduce that trash's tonnage and cost to the town.

- **Recyclable Cardboard:** Cardboard shipping boxes (flattened, packaging tape removed), corrugated cardboard, pizza boxes (empty with no food/grease residue), uncoated cardboard egg cartons, cereal boxes (without inside plastic or wax paper liner), paper box board (tissue boxes), and paper towel and toilet paper rolls.

- **Not Recyclable Cardboard:** Cardboard with stuck-on food or grease stains, 'cardboard-like' milk and juice containers (they have plastic coating that is not recyclable), waxed or treated cardboard, paper cups, paper or magazines laminated with plastic, mail/mailling envelopes, books, Styrofoam, and spiral wound containers used to package products such as frozen orange juice, potato chips, nuts, dried fruit, oatmeal, and dough for cookies and biscuits (these containers are made of paper with metal or plastic resin liners, plastic or metal bottoms/rims.)

New signage has been placed at the Transfer Station to assist the public in using the proper receptacles for their recyclables. Please do not put non-cardboard items in the

cardboard-only bin, as this would contaminate the load and adversely impact the town's ability to collect Casella's rebates. Single stream recycling collection mixes all recyclable paper fibers and containers (paper, plastic, metal, and glass) together. Casella's processing system separates the various recyclables from Eastford's single stream recycling bin for the recycling activities. Casella is required to inspect incoming loads for potential violations of Connecticut recycling regulations. Plastic bags and film, Styrofoam, full/partially full drink bottles, wood, yard waste, packaging insulation, and food waste, are all examples of items which result in load contamination.

Eastford's rating for a recent audit by Casella was "clean" thanks to the awareness and diligence of our citizens and transfer station employees! Please continue to help the town comply with State recycling law and prevent rejection of single stream loads by emptying all containers before placing them in the single stream bin and by ensuring that only paper, plastic, metal, and glass items are placed there. In addition to following signage, the Transfer Station attendant can assist you in the correct placement of your trash items. Please call the Selectmen's Office at 860-974-0133, ext. 3, if you encounter any issues or require additional information. Thank you for your full cooperation!

- Submitted by the Eastford Selectmen's Office

Early voting dates announced

EASTFORD — The following dates for both early voting and general elections have been announced for October and November. Early voting for the General Election will be held daily from Oct. 21-28, Oct. 30, and Nov. 1-3,

from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Early voting will also be held Oct. 29 and Oct. 31, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The General Election will be held Tuesday, Nov. 5, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. All voting will be conducted at the Town Office Building.

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

Jack Larson, Gail and Gary Cameron, Paul and Cecilia Vaida, and Jim and Marian Slye.

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.



SHOUT OUT
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donors who gave a
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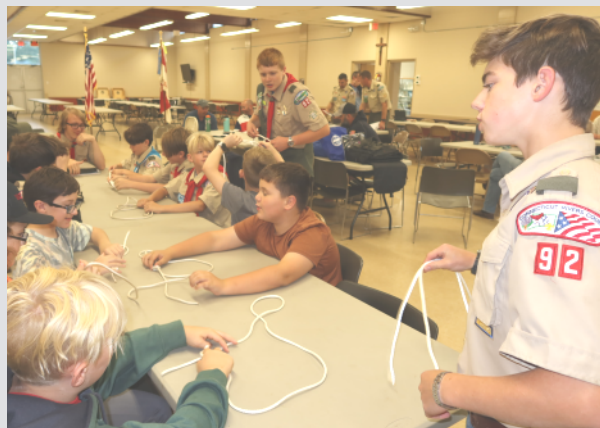
Scouts remain active

EASTFORD/ASHFORD — Cub Scout Troop 92 was the Honor Guard and marched in the Ashford Family Fun Day Parade on Sept. 15. In September, the Troop held a Court of Honor to award merit badges and advancements in rank earned during the summer. We welcomed former Cub Scouts into Troop 92. The Troop also doubled in size! Older Scouts instructed the newcomers in scouting, starting with knot tying. Upcoming activities include fall hiking, campouts, and Scouting instruction.

Cub Scout Pack 92 will kick off another year with their first pack meeting on Friday, Oct. 4, at Knowlton Hall, at 7 p.m. The first pack meeting is a great time for girls and boys entering first to fifth grade to come and see all that the scouts have to offer. The theme of the first meeting is games and they will have something for everyone. New members are welcome.

Troop 92 BSA: Nord Yakovleff, Assistant Scoutmaster; Jesse Burnham, Scoutmaster; Rob Hany, Committee Chairman; Kurt van Heinigen, Cub Master

Courtesy photos



Welcome to the world!



Courtesy photo

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. — Arden (Ari) Gingras was born Sept. 14, 2024, to Corey Gingras and his wife, Brittany Zulkiewicz, of Philadelphia, PA. Eastford grandparents are BG and Nancy Gingras.

SEVEN DECADES STRONG



Courtesy photos

EASTFORD — Loring and Jane White, of Eastford, celebrated their 70th anniversary with family and friends on Sunday, July 28. The Whites were married on June 27, 1954. Pictured at right, Loring and Jane recreated their "cutting the cake" photo with their actual cake topper from their wedding reception 70 years earlier. Jane's wedding dress was also on display at the party, along with photos from the wedding.



Our next issue will be published on:

Dec. 1

Please send all submissions to
eastfordnews@gmail.com by:

Nov. 15



**SEND US
YOUR
PHOTOS!**

eastfordnews@gmail.com

Churches unite to host sports camp outreach



Kids gather around for a Bible lesson at Sports Camp.



Kids pay attention to the speaker during rally time.

EASTFORD — More than 100 children convened at Eastford Elementary School every morning during the week of July 22-26 for the annual Sports Camp event hosted by the Congregational Church of Eastford, Living Proof Church in Ashford, and UW Sports Ministry. The theme of the week was “Undeclared,” based on Romans 8:37-39, and kids were given instruction in several sports, including basketball, soccer, flag football, and cheerleading. Kids also participated in singing, rallies, and Bible lessons during the week.

Courtesy photos



Pastor Pat McCue (left), of Living Proof Church, and Pastor Mike Moran, of the Congregational Church of Eastford, pose for a photo during Sports Camp.



Kids practice dribbling their basketballs.



Staff and volunteers gathered for a group photo after the final morning of Sports Camp.

EBC goes on 'Scripture Safari' for VBS

ANNUAL PROGRAM RAISES MORE THAN \$1K FOR MISSIONARY FAMILY

EASTFORD — Eastford Baptist Church hosted its annual Vacation Bible School nightly from Monday, July 29 through Friday, Aug. 2. The theme, “Scripture Safari,” placed the children in an African safari theme as they learned about the Bible in their nightly lessons. In all, 92 children registered for the event, who through a Penny War all week, raised more than \$1,000 for Caleb and Melissa Gibello, missionaries currently serving in Papua New Guinea. The week concluded with a family BBQ in the church’s Family Activity Center. Next year’s Christmas-themed VBS, titled, *Christmas Chronicles: Celebrating the Birth of the Savior*, is currently slated for July 28-Aug. 1, 2025.

Courtesy photos



The children and leaders all gathered together for this group photo on Thursday, Aug. 1, celebrating a great week at “Scripture Safari.”



Lauren and Victoria enjoy themselves during craft time.



From left, Sebastian, Eli, Malkijah, Luke, and Emma, all take a moment to pose for a photo.



Lorenzo and his sister, Elena, smile for a photo op at the official Scripture Safari Jeep.



Natallia Kneeland, Karissa Howard (with her brother, TJ), and Chloe Minor show their team spirit in the church’s decorated sanctuary.



Reaghan tries on her very own version of “the armor of God.”

2024 ELECTION

ELECTION PREVIEW 35TH STATE SENATE DISTRICT

JEFF GORDON
INCUMBENT (R)

The Eastford Communicator sent a questionnaire to both candidates, with the same questions, with the same rules. These answers are edited due to space constraints — but every care was taken to preserve points made by the candidates, in the interest of fairness.



1. In your opinion, what are some of the most important issues facing the 35th Senate District, and Eastford specifically?

"The #1 issue that is on the minds of everyone I meet, talk, and work with is the high cost of living and taxation in Connecticut. Other issues of concern are public safety and public education. These are all issues that I have been working on as a State Senator."

2. How do you hope to tackle these issues if re-elected to the State Senate?

"I will continue my strong track record of working with and working for people. For example, I advocated for and helped pass historic income tax cuts, increases in the earned income tax credit, and expansion of tax exemptions for retirement accounts, pensions, and IRAs. I worked to stop \$2.5 million in public education cuts to the Senate District and worked to increase state funding overall for public education. I stand strong in providing law enforcement with the resources they need, to empower them to do what they are trained to do to keep us safe and help us when we need help, and to hold criminals accountable for their crimes. I stand strong in defending all of our individual rights, parental rights, and medical freedoms, and have a track record of doing so. And, as a state senator and a doctor, I have worked successfully to keep needed health care services in our region and to help expand services, including maternal health, labor

and delivery, and women's health."

3. Why did you decide to run for re-election to the State Senate?

"I am running for re-election to continue the work I do every day for the people of Eastford and of the 35th State Senate District. It is an honor to serve, including being someone who provides constituent services for people when they need help."

4. Talk about your background. What makes you stand out as the best choice for State Senator?

"I have a strong track record of public service. I was the Chairman of Woodstock's Planning & Zoning Commission for 15 years. I have been serving as State Senator for two years. My work ethic is to roll up my sleeves, delve into the work that needs to be done, learn the facts of what is going on, tell the truth, provide people opportunities to have their voices heard, and always use common sense. My track record is strong for working with people, working for people, and working together to get good things done. I often say that it is not just what a person does that matters, but also how they do it. On both accounts I have a proven, strong track record. I serve on the Public Health, Public Safety, Appropriation, and veterans & Military Affairs Committees, which provides me good vantage points to serve the 35th Senate District. I am also a Co-Chair of the Rural Caucus to help our part of the state."

5. Can you share a personal story or experience that highlights your commitment to public service?

"Two experiences come to mind about my public service at a personal level. First, when I was chairman of Woodstock's Planning & Zoning Commission, there was young family that sought my help understanding how to use the land they bought to build a house and start a small business home occupation. They were confused by the town's zoning regulations. I was able to help them. I was able to update the zoning regulations to make them easier to understand and better able to serve the people of the town."

Second, during my time as a State Senator, I have been approached by many veterans who need assistance learning about and accessing services they have earned through their service to our country. I have been proud as the Ranking Member on the Veterans & Military Affairs Committee to help them and their families."

6. What is the most important thing you would say to an undecided voter heading to the polls on Nov. 5?

"You want and deserve a State Senator who works hard every day, works for you, tells the truth, lets you know what is going on, seeks hearing from you, and is a strong voice for you to get things done with a track record of proven results. I am the state senator serving you that has that track record. Let's continue to work together."

THE LIGHTNING ROUND



1. Describe yourself using only three words.

"Common-sense, family-oriented, and hard-working."

2. If you were trapped on a deserted island, and could have only one book, which book are you choosing?

"*The Hobbit*"

3. What's your favorite movie?

"*Star Wars* ... the original."

4. What is your favorite hobby?

"Legos."

5. What are your top three albums of all time?

"Phil Collins, Beatles, Taylor Swift."

6. You have the opportunity to eat dinner with three people, dead or alive. Who are you inviting to dinner?

"Always my wife! Ted Williams (and get an autograph on a baseball), and former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt."

7. What is your dream vacation?

"Going to Cape Cod with my family."

8. What's your favorite local place to visit?

"Any restaurant that serves pizza."

9. What's your favorite snack?

"Potato chips."

10. A genie grants you one wish. What do you wish for (besides more wishes)?

"The opportunity to spend more time in my life with my family and friends."

THE LIGHTNING ROUND



1. Describe yourself using only three words.

"Accomplished. Straightforward. Resilient."

2. If you were trapped on a deserted island, and could have only one book, which book are you choosing?

"The largest hardcover English dictionary ever created, with tiny print and bonus illustrations."

3. What's your favorite movie?

"Shawshank Redemption."

4. What is your favorite hobby?

"Creating mixed media art."

5. What are your top three albums of all time?

"Purple Rain by Prince; Traveler by Chis Stapleton; and Simply the Best by Tina Turner."

6. You have the opportunity to eat dinner with three people, dead or alive. Who are you inviting to dinner?

"My maternal grandmother, my maternal grandfather, and Leonardo de Vinci."

7. What is your dream vacation?

"Anywhere with my family and friends."

8. What's your favorite local place to visit?

"Any hiking trails in the district!"

9. What's your favorite snack?

"Popcorn."

10. A genie grants you one wish. What do you wish for (besides more wishes)?

"One of the following: 1. Peace on earth; 2. To protect all children from any harm or illness; 3. To give a wish to someone deserving that needs it more than I do."



**MERRY
GARRETT**

CHALLENGER (D)

2024 
ELECTION

ELECTION PREVIEW
35TH STATE SENATE DISTRICT

The Eastford Communicator sent a questionnaire to both candidates, with the same questions, with the same rules. These answers are edited due to space constraints — but every care was taken to preserve points made by the candidates, in the interest of fairness.

1. In your opinion, what are some of the most important issues facing the 35th Senate District, and Eastford specifically?

"The cost of living in the district, [including] incredibly high Eversource rate hikes. Property tax increases, coupled with lack of funding for education, laying off teachers and support staff. Slow or no modernization of infrastructure. Our senior citizens, young adults, and middle-class families need affordable, attainable, inclusive housing options to allow them to stay, downsize, or move back to [their hometowns]. Our regional hospitals need to re-establish maternity care and other services."

2. How do you hope to tackle these issues if elected to the State Senate?

"We need to investigate price gouging. As companies make record-breaking profits, we continue to pay the price. The Eversource situation should have been addressed before we received increases. ... I will fight price gouging at every opportunity."

We must start getting our fair share of funding from the state. Receiving a grant here or there is not enough. Our general funds require more to allow us to increase funding for education, seniors, and property tax stabilization.

We need to make adjustments to outdated planning and zoning that stymies opportunity for middle-class citizens by adjusting building codes, turning empty commercial properties into home, land use, and other uses.

It is time regional hospitals became part of the state hospital system. We do not want our health to become a commodity owned by

private equity firms. I will fight for our district's hospitals. ... Every person in our district deserves available and quality health."

3. Why did you decide to run for election to the State Senate?

"I have been asked to run for this seat several times over the years. Senior citizens and middle-income families are struggling when they should be prospering and saving. Young people want to come back to the district, but cannot afford to. Teachers are being laid off or are leaving the district. Environmental issues, health care, and other issues have seen no progress. As I have lived in eastern Connecticut my entire life, I will always stand up for what is right and do what is best for our district without compromise."

4. Talk about your background. What makes you stand out as the best choice for State Senator?

"I bring a fresh, new perspective and an extensive, highly successful business background as a director of Regulatory Insurance Technology and small business owner. I have been civically involved with many committees and non-profit organizations over the years. My family is union strong, works in law enforcement (State Police) and the Stamford Superior Court, and in the military, from brigadier general to staff sergeant. As someone that started their career in the tobacco fields at 13, and has lived/worked in Connecticut my entire life, I understand people from every walk of life."

5. Can you share a personal story or experience that highlights

your commitment to public service?

"I was a Brownie and a Girl Scout. I was always civically involved, from the American Red Cross to the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, to Habitat for Humanity, to Tolland Together with the Hartford Foundation for Giving, etc. Many times, years later, someone tells me about how they paid it forward due to something I did to help them. It's always humbling."

For example, when called upon by the Governor's Prevention Partnership to help create a mentoring program to include corporations and local schools, I created safety protocols to protect children. Working with the GPP was life-changing. It was many years later when a former student recognized me [and] told me about her decision to become a registered nurse. She told me the mentoring program was the first time someone really took an interest in her ... and she never forgot that. It was a heartwarming conversation and wonderful that she was paying it forward."

6. What is the most important thing you would say to an undecided voter heading to the polls on Nov. 5?

"I am here to represent all people in the district, regardless of affiliations. I've been endorsed by the Independent Party and the Working Families Party. My family is involved in law enforcement and the military, as well as union members. Results matter. ... I will fight to ensure we are no longer an afterthought. I will do the work, as I have done my entire stellar career, to ensure success."

It's back-to-school time for EES students

EASTFORD — Eastford Elementary School students headed back to school for the 2024-25 academic year on Wednesday, Aug. 28. Parents from all over Eastford were kind enough to send photos of their kids' first day to us here at the *Eastford Communicator*! From all of us, we wish all students the best of luck this year!

Courtesy photos



The Gilletts celebrated their first day of school with this snapshot. From left, Sophie started her eighth-grade year; while her brother, Logan, started his sixth-grade year. The youngest, Nathaniel, started his first-grade year.



The Normans — from left, Mitchell (Grade 8), Jillian (Grade 6), and Kara (Grade 3), were all smiles as they headed off for the first day of school.



The Haynes sisters were ready for their first day. From left, Scarlett started her first day of fourth grade, Macy started her sixth-grade year, and Abby started her eighth-grade year.



The Boccacio brothers, from left, Nathan and Vinny, were ready for the first day of school.



Mia Kernan (Grade 8), left, and her brother Jack (Grade 4), pose for a photo before starting their first day of school.



Sylas Platt, left (holding Athena), started his sixth-grade year; while his sister, Alina, started her fifth-grade year.



Hope (Grade 3), Emmett (Grade 3) and Levi McGurl (Grade 1) were ready for the year to begin!



All "signs" point to Holly Dubina beginning her eighth-grade year with a smile, while her brother, Beau, began his third-grade year.

NOTICE FROM THE EASTFORD GROVE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

• Flags: American flags and fire department flags will be removed after Veterans Day, Monday, Nov. 11. Plot owners who remove their military markers for the winter are reminded to reset them the week prior to Memorial Day.

• Trustees Meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 12, 7 p.m., Ivy Glenn

• Seasonal Decorations: We wish to thank the Artificial decorations will be allowed from Thanksgiving, Nov. 28, to March 15, 2025. After March 15, the seasonal decorations will be removed, and only live plants will be permitted.

• Plot/Space Purchase: Appointments can be made to

view the cemetery grounds and to select a plot for purchase. To make an appointment, call 860-974-1349.

Board of Trustees: Alex Kowalchuk, Carolyn Hazard, David Barlow, Ken Grube, Scott Huri, Lauren Anderson, Linda Torgeson, Rick Torgeson

We wish to thank the following people who have donated to the Eastford Grove Cemetery since the June 2023 publication of The Eastford Communicator: James & Jan Dingwell, Daniel Melnick, Carolyn Carter Galica, Cathy Ann Clark, Martha Shenton, Janice Bosworth, Charles

French, Beverly & Victor Salcius, Donald & Dorothy Bressette, Pat Ethridge, Allan & Joyce Hernberg, Linda Torgeson, Peggy Sproul, Russ & Nancy Mayhew, Stacey Willis, Shirley Michell, Laura & Michael Andert, David Tatem, Ralph Yulo, Mary Bloom, Guy & Jane Grube, Jeannine Spink, Susan Ulseth, James & Lorraine Price, David Barlow, Lauren Anderson, Effie Vinal, Diana Bowen, Barbara Urban, June Staveski, Jacquelyn Charest, Susan Klare, Bill & Carol Anderson, Elizabeth Samuels, Carolyn Hazard.

EASTFORD GROVE CEMETERY PERPETUAL CARE DONATION FORM

Yes, I would like to help. Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gift in memory of _____

Send to: Eastford Grove Cemetery Assoc., Inc. P.O. Box 284, Eastford, CT 06242

'Fall Extravanganza' coming to 4-H Camp

On Oct. 19 this year, Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp will be holding its 3rd Annual Fall Extravaganza from 2-4 PM. In the midst of teen weekend, teens help to decorate the cabins on the trick or treat trail and are on hand to run games, hand out candy and happily give tours to visitors at this fun event. It costs only \$5 per trick or treat, ages 2 and up. Go on the trick-or-treat trail and get an early start on their Halloween candy collection. No worries about traffic or walking around in the dark. It is the perfect time to break in this year's costume and take some great photos.

We will have s'mores and hot chocolate at the fire pit by the pond for everyone to enjoy. The donut eating contest is always a hit and we have other games to keep our visitors occupied. "Buck's on the Run" will be there for purchase of your favorite ice cream along with some other sweet treats for sale. Proceeds benefit the Health Center Renovation. This is a great family event and it is a good chance to check out our camp facilities, enjoy the fall foliage and meet some of our staff. Event is rain or shine.



Courtesy photos



EASTFORD CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE

The Eastford Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission 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 p.m. at the Town Office Building, lower level. Meetings are open to the public.

Among its duties, the ECHPC continues to monitor the trails in town, including a section of the Boston Turnpike Trail, the Old Connecticut Path in Crystal Pond Park, and the George Askew Trail. Recently, we also have been working on an inventory of the historic stone walls in Eastford.

SPORTS



Adam Minor photo

BULLDOGS START SEASON STRONG WITH WIN OVER PARISH HILL

CHAPLIN — Wes DePercio netted four goals, and Charlie Ellsworth added three of his own, as the Eastford Bulldogs claimed a dominant, 8-1 win over Parish Hill Middle School on Tuesday, Sept. 17. Callum St. John added a goal in the victory. It was a strong start for the Bulldogs, who scored early and often, and did not look back, starting the season 1-0. Pictured, DePercio, left, and Ellsworth celebrate their hat tricks after the game.

CALENDAR

ONGOING

Adult Community Volleyball is held each Monday at 6:30 p.m., at Eastford Baptist Church, 133 Union Rd., Eastford, CT 06242. Join us for a few games of casual volleyball! No need to be a professional! Just come and have some free fun with friends and make new ones! No registration required.

OCTOBER

Thursday, Oct. 3

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," Thursday, Oct. 3, at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Wednesday, Oct. 9

Eastford Public Library presents "Maker's Night," Wednesday, Oct. 9, at 6 p.m. for adults and teens. Most months, everyone brings along some type of handwork, such as: crocheting, knitting, embroidery, quilting, drawing, journaling, etc. Occasionally, we have seasonal or group crafts where everything you need is provided at no cost to patrons.

Thursday, Oct. 10

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," Thursday, Oct. 10, at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Friday, Oct. 11

Join us at the Eastford Public Library for "Wee Wings," a Pajama Storytime with Horizon Wings at 6:30 p.m. You must register for this special event. Simply call the library at 860-974-0125, e-mail us at eastfordpublib@gmail.com or stop in to sign up. Horizon Wings Raptor and Rehabilitation and Education is a non-profit wildlife center located in Ashford. Owner Mary- Beth

Kaeser will read a story to the children that teaches them what to do if they find a baby bird. Three of her smaller raptor friends will be featured in this program which is perfect for little ones ages 3 and up.

Saturday, Oct. 12

Science Saturday at the Eastford Public Library. Join us for a STEAM activity perfect for the season. Please register your child for this event. Limit 12

Wednesday, Oct. 16

The Last Green Valley (TLGV), a non-profit charitable organization that celebrates, advocates for, and protects the 35-town National Heritage Corridor in eastern Connecticut and south-central Massachusetts, has announced an Eastford event as part of its 34th annual "Walktober" experience. Wednesday, Oct. 16, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: "Woods Wise: A Forester Reads His Forest" (Rain Date: Oct. 23), Town Line Tree Farm, 97 Weeks Rd., Eastford, CT 06242; park at Crystal Pond Park. See the forest through the eyes of former UConn Extension Forester Steve Broderick as we tour his property in Eastford. Steve is "woods wise" when it comes to what is going on in the forest and has been personally managing his land for over three decades. During the tour, we'll learn the history of his land, in particular what he has done over the past decades to improve the health and vitality of his woods for harvestable wood products, sugar bush management for maple syrup production, and wildlife habitat. Registration is required. E-mail bill@tlgv.org, or by call (860) 774-3300.

Thursday, Oct. 17

The Last Green Valley (TLGV), a non-profit charitable organization that celebrates, advocates for, and protects the 35-town National Heritage

Corridor in eastern Connecticut and south-central Massachusetts, has announced an Eastford event as part of its 34th annual "Walktober" experience. Thursday, Oct. 17, 2-5 p.m.: "TLGV Wander & Ponder: Natchaug State Forest Loop", Chaplin Road (Route 198), Eastford (GPS: 41.840821, -72.0924118), parking in lots along road from Route 198 to Fernow Bridge. Join TLGV at Natchaug State Forest for a difficult, 3-hour, 4.3-mile loop. The loop will cover part of the old Civilian Conservation Corps trail and even stop by the old CCC camp. TLGV Wander & Ponder Walks span the length of the Last Green Valley and are inspired by the transformative journey across New England taken in Andrew Krivak's *The Bear*. Join a community of readers to explore the relationship between humanity and nature as part of a year-long Big Read Program at Eastern Connecticut State University with walks, book discussions, exhibits, and creative writing workshops. Sponsored by the Last Green Valley and ECSU. For more information, call (860) 774-3300, or visit www.thelastgreenvalley.org.

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. At 5 p.m., Friends of the Eastford Public Library will hold their October meeting. All are invited to learn more about the Friends and the wonderful ways in which they help the library.

Saturday, Oct. 19

Join Pastor Timothy Howard Jr. at Eastford Baptist Church on Saturday, Oct. 19, at 6 p.m., for a Community Painting Class. Paintbrushes, paint, and canvasses will be provided for free, but you are more than welcome to bring your own supplies. Pastor Howard is a longtime artist, and will guide you through a colorful, creative

scene. Register for free online at <https://eastfordbaptist.churchcenter.com/registrations>. Eastford Baptist Church is located at 133 Union Rd., Eastford, CT 06242. Contact the church at (860) 974-1414, or e-mail eastfordbaptistoffice@gmail.com for more information.

Eastford Public Library presents "Haunted Happenings with After Dark Paranormal," from 6-8 p.m. Spooky snacks will be served. This event is for adults and teens age 16 and up. Patron Carissa Brodeur and her partner will discuss haunted locations and present a slide show. Please register for this event.

Tuesday, Oct. 22

Eastford Public Library presents the "Grim Readers Book Club," Tuesday, Oct. 22, at 6 p.m. We will be discussing Paul Tremblay's horror novel "The Cabin at the End of the World." All are welcome! Extra copies of this book are available at the library. This book club meets every other month on the fourth Tuesday at 6 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 24

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," Thursday, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. At 6p.m., Annual Adopt a Book Library Fundraiser co-hosted by The Library Board and The Friends of the Eastford Public Library. This beloved event takes place each autumn. It gives our patrons an opportunity to adopt brand-new books at cost and gift them back to the library. Book plates are added to the books in recognition of the givers or to whomever the books are dedicated. Refreshments will be served. We will also be honoring our dedicated library volunteers! Come meet our Library Board and Friends of the Library.

CALENDAR

CONTINUED from pg. 11

Sunday, Oct. 27

Buell's Orchard will host its annual Trunk or Treat on Sunday, Oct. 27, from 2-4 p.m. Free and open to the public. We are always looking to add more "trunkers." No pets, please!

Thursday, Oct. 31

Happy Halloween from the Eastford Public Library! At 11 a.m., "Halloween Storytime with Miss Jennifer." Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. From 5-7 p.m., Trick or Treat at the Library. Stop in to show off your Halloween costumes!

NOVEMBER

Thursday, Nov 7

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," Thursday, Nov. 7, at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Saturday, Nov. 9

Eastford Public Library presents the "BBC Book Club" Saturday, Nov. 9, at 1 p.m. All are welcome to attend this multi-genre book club. We meet every other month on the second Saturday at 1 p.m. Copies of the book club pick will be available in early October.

Wednesday, Nov. 13

Eastford Public Library presents "Maker's Night" Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 6 p.m., for teens and adults. This month we will be making a Thanksgiving Wreath

Centerpiece at no cost to our patrons. Please sign up for this event. Limit is 12.

Thursday, Nov 14

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," Thursday, Nov. 14, at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Thursday, Nov 21

Eastford Public Library presents "Storytime with Miss Jennifer," Thursday, Nov. 21, at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. At 5 p.m., Friends of the Eastford Public Library November meeting. All are welcome.

Saturday, Nov. 23

Eastford Public Library presents

"Be Thankful Craft and Story," Saturday, Nov. 23, in collaboration with the Eastford PTO, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. You may register through the school or here at the library.

Sunday, Nov. 24

Eastford Baptist Church will host its annual Thanksgiving Luncheon on Sunday, Nov. 24, after church in the Family Activity Center. Invite your friends and family to join us during our A.M. Worship Service at 10:30 a.m., followed by a traditional Thanksgiving meal afterwards! Stay as long as you want, and leave as you must. The meal is completely free and open to the community. For more information, call the church at (860) 974-1414, or e-mail eastfordbaptistoffice@gmail.com

EIFC UPDATE JEANNINE SPINK

Emergency responses have increased. July – 18 responses - August – 18 responses. From January 1, 2024 to mid-September, we have responded to 173 emergencies. For 2023, we responded 237 times. we anticipate surpassing the 237 responses.

August and September were months for mandatory testing. All members are mandated to have a full physical examination annually administered by an OSHA approved physician which includes vision, hearing, lung function, motor skills assessment, respirator use evaluation and EKG.

Drills are scheduled every Wednesday evening at the firehouse. During July, August and September drills consisted of pump/hose advancement and command, practice trauma skills, review documentation forms, SCBA Flow Test and Pump

Test, monthly truck checks, walk through the Eastford School, boat operations, allergic reaction and Line Officers.

A major mandatory test is an annual OSHA Respiratory Clearance & Fit Testing for members who participate in interior and exterior fire suppression and suspected carbon monoxide exposure. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Standard 1910.134, if a respirator (SCBA-Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) is necessary for job performance, all departments are required to have a respiratory protection program in place. A respirator clearance clears the member to wear a respirator, it does not medically clear a firefighter for duty, thus a full physical examination including EKG is administered. Once cleared for

respirator use, the member is required to have an annual mandatory respirator fit test, or whenever there is a change in the facepiece or any visual observation of changes in the member's physical condition that could affect respirator mask fit.

SCBA's must meet testing frequency requirements at least monthly on a calibrated breathing machine, i.e. visual checks of components such as straps, lenses and tubing, no excess wear and tear, ensure air cylinder is full.

Members, along with our mutual aid departments who participated in the Congregational Church fire, were invited to the Eastford School on July 6 with thanks for our efforts from Pastor Moran for a fight well fought. All who responded were presented with a gift card to a local

restaurant.

Chief Beaudoin and Deputy Chief Roy met with Senator Gordon to touch base on bonding requests for the communications upgrade and siding repair project. Donations to the project are appreciated and can be sent to EIFC, PO Box 333, Eastford, CT 06242 – Memo line: Building Project.

A DEEP grant was submitted for the purchase of 2 battery powered leafblowers, 4 lengths of 1 3/4" hose, 4 lengths of 2 1/2" and 6 pagers.

Fall is near with winter not far behind. You can help us protect you by visibly displaying your green house number signs at the beginning of your driveway and cleaning around the entry. If you don't have one, or need a replacement, stop by the firehouse any Wednesday and get your FREE sign and numbers.

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EASTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH UPDATE

TIMOTHY R. HOWARD JR.

The picture I included this month displays one of my favorite parts of the history of Eastford Baptist Church, namely our historic meeting house.

As you can tell from the style of vehicles, this picture was taken in the early 1900's with our meeting house prominently featured in the background. While the church was established in 1793, the building in the picture is the second meeting house in our church's life, being completed in October 1843 and still stands at 133 Union Road today.

Since this picture was taken our building has gone through several renovations and additions, beginning in 1903 with what was known as the "chapel," which has since been converted to our lovely foyer where you would enter if you attended one

of our services today. Later, in 1955 an addition was added to this same area to accommodate a growing Sunday School program, which is still going today. In 1962, a two-story "Christian education wing" was added, which included the luxury of bathrooms finally being added to the building. A final addition was added in 1978, this time to the sanctuary, doubling its size and adding more classrooms. The most recent construction on our church property is a separate Family Activity Center which includes classrooms, a gym, and a kitchen.

If you are in the area and would like to check out our beautiful campus and this historic building, please be sure to reach out to me or join us at 10:30 a.m. this Sunday for worship! Blessings!

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF EASTFORD UPDATE

MIKE MORAN

The Congregational Church of Eastford offers programs open to the community designed to help people in various sorts of spiritual, emotional and practical need.

- **Grief Share:** The Congregational Church of Eastford will be offering a program called "Grief Share" beginning in October 2024. The program is designed to help people deal with the grief associated with the loss of a loved one. The format includes a video presentation regarding grief and a time of group discussion led by people who have walked through grief of their own. Many people have found comfort and hope through this compassionate program. The activities this fall include:

- "Loss of a Spouse" - Single session seminar, Sunday, Oct. 27, from 2-4 p.m.

- "Grief Share" - Thirteen-week series, Sunday afternoons from 2-3:30 p.m., Nov. 3 through Jan. 26, 2025.

- "Surviving the Holidays" - Single session seminar, Thursday Nov. 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

There is no charge. All Grief Share sessions are at the Congregational Church of Eastford offices at 4 County Road (right next to the Post Office). Register at <https://cceedford.org/griefshare/>

- **Celebrate Recovery:** Powerful biblical, Christ-centered 12-step ministry for people dealing with a wide range of life struggles (various kinds of present or past abuse and addictions, anger, codependency, eating disorders, and more). Ages 18 and over welcome. Our program meets weekly at the First Congregational Church of Pomfret. Tuesdays 7-9 p.m.

- **Adult Caregivers of Aging Loved Ones:** Dealing with aging loved ones and issues like dementia can be daunting. Caregiver Support Group that meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are held at the Eastford Public Library.

- **Family Music.** These free

classes are designed to captivate the natural joy of music and movement inherent in children ages birth through kindergarten. Their parents/caregivers are integral participants for classes designed for children ages birth to 3. Singing, focused listening activities, dancing, and playing skills are developed. Tuesday mornings from 10-10:30 a.m. (birth to 3 with caregiver), 10:45-11:30 a.m. (age 4+ independent for most of class). Meet at Church Offices, 4 County Road. Register at <https://cceedford.org/family-music-classes/>.

A quick update from Pastor Mike at the Congregational Church of Eastford. We continue to be grateful to our community and friends for all the support following the loss of our beautiful church building. You all are wonderful! It has been nearly a year and a half since the fire. Things take time, but we are making good progress toward our new building. We have acquired almost nine acres of land on John Perry Road and will be building a new, one-story facility there. The developing design will give us larger worship space, lots of kids' space to include an indoor play area, and a large community room to host receptions and events. It is our hope that we can be a rich blessing to Eastford and our greater community as we move into the future.

We are also adding to our staff, having called an associate pastor named Evan Burgess. He and his wife Chelsey grew up in Manchester, Conn., and have been serving a Christian missionary agency the last several years. They have a young son, Roman. They will be joining us right at the start of October. Our vision is that Evan will work alongside Pastor Mike for what will probably be a few years, after which Evan will take on the lead role. We are excited as he brings a love of the Lord, of people, and youthful energy (he is 32 years old) to help us step into a future with the up-and-coming generations.

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 Nov. 15.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT DONNA LEAKE

The transition from summer to fall has been a busy and very rewarding time for the Eastford Community of Learners. Although the official enrollment date is Oct. 1, 2024, we started the school year with 171 Eastford Elementary students and 55 high school, magnet and outplaced students.

Hopefully, you have noticed the esthetic and safety improvements of our school grounds that resulted from the completion of the paving of our driveway, playground and middle school walkway. This paving project has been a personal goal and a part of our long-term facilities plan. A special thanks to P. Willis Construction for their flexibility and willingness to work around our school schedule needs. Thanks also to Deb Richards for her efforts in obtaining a grant that covered the cost of paving the driveway and the playground and to our Public Works team for oversight of the work in progress. This project is truly a great example of the strong school, town, and community partnership spirit in Eastford.

Please join me in welcoming to the Eastford Elementary staff the following new staff members: Seth Budd, Mary Dennison,

Chelsea Friedman (paraeducators) and Tammy Goodwin (nighttime custodian). The Eastford School District is currently seeking people who are interested and qualified to serve as substitutes for teachers and/or paraeducators. If interested, please review the application process at <https://www.eastfordct.org/about-us-contact/employment-and-rfps/employment-and-rfps/>.

Our grant-funded after-school programs, under the direction of Candice Mead, is off to an exciting beginning. New and exciting programs have been added to the after-school schedule at no cost for students in grades K-8. We will also continue to offer free after-hours family partnership programs throughout the 24-25 school year. Please check our website <http://www.eastfordct.org> or contact the school office, 860-974-1130, for information regarding these offerings. Remember to also check the website for the very timely and informative newsletters written and distributed by Principal Carole McCombe.

In August, the Board of Education recognized the recipients of the Community Foundation of Eastern

Connecticut awards:

- Dennis S. Barlow Award: Marco Maluf, Anna Kellermann
- Harold D. Carpenter Award: Isaac Torcellini
- Esther & Lucie Harmon and Leta Sabin Trepal Award: Clayton Singleton, Kerry Blais, Isaac Torcellini, Eric Mathewson, Elizabeth Bishop-Klee
- Eleanor K. Lewis Award: Anna Kellermann
- Mary King Sharpe Award: Eric Mathewson
- Edith Wheaton Smith Award: Hunter Larson, Braden Ayer, Elizabeth Bishop-Klee
- Town of Eastford General Award: Hunter Larson
- Emil Vaida Award: Eric Mathewson

And the recipients of the Ethel Cushing Gardner Music Award: Isaac Torcellini, Micah Torcellini, and Clayton Singleton.

At the August and September meetings the Eastford Board of Education:

- Accepted as complete State Project 039-0015 RR/PV at Eastford Elementary School
- Approved the submission of the 2023-2024 Drill Log to DEMHS
- Approved the 2024-2025 Bus Routes

- Approved the updating of several policies, including Policy 4126/4226 and Policy 5152, to be in compliance with current Title IX legislation. The BOE also approved a new policy regarding Parental Access to Instructional Material (Policy 6173). The BOE policy book is available at <https://www.eastfordct.org/board/board-of-education-policies/>

- Approved the revisions to the 2024-25 School Calendar, changing Oct. 11, 2024 and Feb. 14, 2025 to early release days for students

- Approved application for Title IV funding in the amount of \$10,000.

As we move through October, I continue to embrace the excitement for new learning in the 2024-25 school year. Please note that the invitation to contact me at dleake@eastfordct.org for questions, concerns or exciting new ideas is open to all members of the Eastford Community, regardless of whether you currently have students enrolled in the school system. Of course, it is only with the generous and ongoing support of the caring members of Eastford community that we can continue to provide an outstanding educational opportunity for our students.

FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN DEB RICHARDS

Too often, we do not take the time to thank the people who share their time, expertise, and dedication with the Town of Eastford.

We would like to thank the following and let them we know we appreciate all they do for Eastford.

Board of Assessment Appeals: Guy Grube, Doug Curving, Robert Johnson.

Constables: Randal Chinnock, Christopher Bowen, Nathaniel Fabian, Arvind Shaw

Library Trustees: Jody Blanchette (Chair), Seth Budd, Stephanie Bulan, Rachel Budd, Mary Degostin (Vice chair), James Trowbridge, Dan Belanger,

Nancy Gingras, Jeannine Spink.

Planning Commission: Chuck Lee, Effie Vinal, Robert Torcellini, Denis Day, Nathaniel Fabian

Inland Wetlands Commission: Tom DeJohn (Chair), Robert Torcellini, Denis Day,

Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission: Roger Wolfe (Chair), Deb Lee, Tom Hughes, Mary Ellen Ellsworth, Ralph Yulo, Jr, Frank Castagna

Recreation Commission: Paige Burgess (Chair), Mike Bilica, Laura Barlow, Mike Moran, Seth Budd

Crystal Pond Park Commission (Eastford): David Barlow (Chair), Chuck Lee, Rick Torgeson,

Elizabeth Murphy.

Transfer Station Committee: Christine Hustus, Amelia Peloquin, Emily John, Benjamin Schmidt

Veterans Memorial Committee: Russel Mayhew, Dave Olsen, Chad Therrien, Jennifer Willich, Rick Torgeson, Charles Kernan, Christopher Bowen

Eastern Tourism Board: Patty Sandness

Northeast District Department

of Health: Paul Torcellini

Senior Citizens Committee: Michele Palulis

Emergency Management Committee: Deb Richards, EMD, Doug Beaudoin, Deputy EMD, Donna Leake, Ben Schmidt, Bernard Dubb

Veterans Service Agent: Jennifer Willich

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen and the residents of Eastford — THANK YOU!



**Did we get something wrong?
Let us know! E-mail us at:
eastfordnews@gmail.com
and we will run a correction
in the next issue!**

WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE EASTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY?

JENNIFER JOHN

We would like to extend our gratitude to the wonderful volunteers who have assisted the library during this time of transition. The Ivy Glenn holds a special place in so many hearts. We wish Elizabeth Platt well and look forward to welcoming a new librarian soon.

As memories of our Magical Treehouse Summer fade, we are settling into the predictable and comforting rhythm of autumn. School is back in session and that means we will once again host monthly story times for the Eastford Elementary students

in grades Pre-K through four in addition to all our regular happenings. Do check out the calendar section of this edition of the Communicator to see events we have coming up this fall!

Library hours are: Tuesday, 11 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon.

You may reach us at 860-974-0125 or e-mail us at eastfordpublib@gmail.com.

You can like and follow us on social media for library news and events. On

Facebook you can find us by searching Eastford Public Library. On Instagram our handle is [@eastfordpubliclibrary](https://www.instagram.com/eastfordpubliclibrary).

One of the three grand prize-winning families of our Magic Treehouse Summer Race to Read contest enjoyed their time at an actual treehouse overnight stay in a beautiful, undisclosed location. Brothers Weston and Remy Bell are seen here paddling a canoe and standing on the dock just steps away from the treehouse.

Courtesy photos



TIPS FOR TODAY

LIZ ELLSWORTH

Calling all Pumpkins!

Autumn is here — full of all those things we love — colorful leaves, bonfires, spooky stories, cooler weather, apples, candy, football, Halloween, and all-things pumpkin.

Perhaps, and hopefully, you still grab pumpkins for your front steps, or take joy in the childhood fun of carving Jack-o'-lanterns? Grab an extra pumpkin and fashion it into a bird feeder, or use your Halloween "leftover" Jack-o'-lanterns to make one, too. Pumpkins make a strong

pedestal and re-purposing the gourds into feeders is recycling at its best.

The quick guide: Cut a pumpkin in half and hollow out the seeds. Grab some sticks for perches (to push through a side of the pumpkin), and a bit of string to hang it up. All you need after that is some bird seed. Mass Audubon and the National Audubon Society both have easy-to-follow directions will some additional tips. If you're a video/visual person, here's the pumpkin birdfeeder "how-to" via YouTube from The National

Audubon Society: https://youtu.be/eniE7_2ewmw?si=V56Z5kXmckGcQKCB

- Mass Audubon: www.massaudubon.org/places-to-explore/activities/family-fun/young-explorers-activity-sheets/pumpkin-activities

- The Audubon Society: www.audubon.org/news/pumpkin-bird-feeder-makes-happy-harvest-birds

- Another easy guide, go here: www.familydaystriedandtested.com/pumpkin-bird-feeder

IN THE GARDEN

SUSAN BURNS

As we transition to autumn, let's hope for cooler, drier days in which we spend pleasant time in the garden. It is getting trickier to predict what each season will bring.

Autumn is the only time you should plant peonies. Fall is a good time to divide perennials, to plant trees, shrubs and spring-flowering bulbs. After the gray days of winter, there is nothing more welcoming than the bright colors of daffodils and tulips. Also consider the wonderful snowdrops that arrive so early. Winter aconite is a real treasure. And, there are crocus, scilla, glory-of-the-snow and hyacinths to cheer even the darkest days. These bulbs can be planted in November when most of the garden chores, except raking leaves, are finished.

While deadheading, pulling out annuals and raking leaves, why not start a compost pile? You can use free pallets, chicken wire or nothing at all to start your pile. Kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps, including coffee and tea grounds, just go to waste if you are not composting. The nutrient-rich soil you will create is an excellent growing medium and think of all the plastic bags (of soil) you won't be throwing in the trash.

If you find diseased leaves (rose blackspot for example) under your plants or weeds, do not put them into your compost. Put them in the trash. Weed as much as you can to prevent these unwanted plants from reseeding.

Fall lawn care (up until Oct. 15) includes reseeding, feeding, and the application of lime. After that date, most of the nitrogen in the fertilizer cannot be absorbed by the grass roots. Add limestone to lilacs, lavender and bearded iris.

Unfortunately, invasive plants are taking over our native forests. If you have any of the following plants on your property, get rid of them by mowing, cutting, and pulling repeatedly: Bittersweet vine, autumn olive, euonymous (Burning Bush), Japanese knotweed, barberry. In fact, barberry is a plant that attracts ticks. So, getting rid of it not only helps the forest — it will help you.



Want to see the *Communicator* in its full-color glory? Download the latest PDF at:
www.eastfordcommunicator.com

Senator Jeff Gordon proved he has common sense and he will continue putting families of the 35th District first and giving everyone a voice.

- As your Senator, Jeff fought the health insurance companies and won!
Now, it is more difficult for them to deny coverage for medical treatments in Connecticut.
- Jeff stood up for families and negotiated the largest income tax reduction for working families in state history.
- Jeff kept rural health services accessible, ensuring Rockville Hospital stayed open, maternity services continued at Johnson Memorial, and Day Kimball received necessary funding.
- Jeff opposed the governor's budget cuts and restored \$240 million in funding for public education.



ABOUT JEFF...

- Hematology-Oncology Physician for over 30 years
- Past President of the CT State Medical Society
- Proud husband and father

Senator Gordon has led the charge to reverse the recent Eversource rate increases. He won't stop until he wins!

Paid for by the Eastford RTC. Gary Kendrick, Treasurer



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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

TOWN CLERK

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.

Tax Collector Christine Hustus
christine.hustus@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-1885, ext. 6

ASSESSOR

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

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

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.

Registrar of Voters
Toni Doubleday
toni.doubleday@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-0133, ext. 2

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

James Roy
Phone: (860) 974-2259

BURN OFFICIAL

Nathaniel Fabian
Burn Official
(508) 365-7543



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

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VITAL STATISTICS

MARRIAGES

July: 1
August: 1

DEATHS

July: 2
August: 1

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

July 2: 123 Ashford Rd., Unit 4, \$367,000, Yaacov Kopeliovich to Mark S. Fuller; July 9: 43 Lake Drive, \$161,050, Kenneth N. Tedford (Est.) to Donna E. Tedford; July 10: 140 Old Colony Rd., \$167,000, Town of Eastford to Theresa D. Perkins; July 23: 26 Pifershire Rd., \$250,000, Dirk A. Anderson to Paul R. Hudon; July 30: 109 Boston Turnpike, \$395,000, Steven Pepper to John Nelson

PUBLIC MEETINGS

OCTOBER

Tuesday, Oct. 1: Conservation & Historic Preservation Commission, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

Saturday, Oct. 5: Recreation Commission, 9:30 a.m., Town Office Building

Monday, Oct. 7: Board of Selectmen, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

Tuesday, Oct. 8: Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m., Town Office Building

Wednesday, Oct. 9: Crystal Pond Park Commission, 6 p.m.,

Thursday, Oct. 10: Board of Education, 6 p.m., Eastford Elementary School Library

Thursday, Oct. 24: Library Board of Trustees, 6:30 p.m., Eastford Public Library; Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

NOVEMBER

Saturday, Nov. 2: Recreation Commission, 9:30 a.m., Town Office Building

Tuesday, Nov. 12: Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m., Town Office Building

Thursday, Nov. 14: Board of Education, 6 p.m., Eastford Elementary School Library

Monday, Nov. 18: Board of Selectmen, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

Thursday, Nov. 21: Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

ASSESSOR'S NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

All persons liable to pay taxes are hereby notified to declare all tangible personal property owned by them as of October 1st. CGS 12-41(d) provides that the assessor must apply a 25% PENALTY for failure to file by November 1st.

The Assessor's Office will mail declaration forms to all property owners previously on record. Failure to receive a form does not negate the requirements to declare. Forms are available online and in the Assessor's Office.

NOTE: A declaration for real property or registered motor vehicles are not necessary. Taxable personal property includes: **unregistered motor vehicles, motor vehicles located in Connecticut but registered in another state**, office, manufacturing and farming equipment, machinery, tools, leasehold improvements. Please call the Assessor's Office for a full list or if you need clarification.

VETERANS: who served for more than ninety days during a time of war or have been disabled must have recorded their honorable discharge with the Town Clerk by October 1st in order to receive an exemption against their 2025 tax bill.

ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS: must submit an application to the Assessor's Office in order to receive 2023 Motor Vehicle benefits no later than December 2025. A copy of your ID is required.

ADDITIONAL VETERAN'S EXEMPTION: Increased exemptions are available for those who meet the necessary income requirements and file with the Assessor's Office by October 1st. Biennial filing is required, and proof of income must be furnished at the time of application.

HOMEOWNERS: Connecticut law provides for Annual Tax Relief for persons who are 65 years or older or totally disabled who meet necessary qualifications. To be eligible for a benefit for the 2025 tax bill, an application with proof of income and, if applicable, proof of total disability must be filed during the following dates:

HOMEOWNERS: Feb. 1 through May 15; **RENTERS:** April 1 through Sept 30

PERSONS PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED, regardless of age, may also apply for the benefits under the elderly program.

AMBULANCE-TYPE VEHICLE, used exclusively for the purpose of transporting any medically incapacitated individual, except for payment, may be eligible for exemption.

TOTALLY AND PERMANENTLY DISABLED PERSONS: Any person under the age of 65 that has been awarded total disability must apply by October 1st in order to receive a \$1000 assessment exemption. Applicants must furnish proof of award.

FARM MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT: farmers must file a notarized M-28 exemption form on or before November 1st annually to receive an exemption for farm machinery.

LAND CLASSIFICATION: Persons seeking to apply under farm, for the first time, must file an application between September 1st and October 31st with the Assessor's Office. Persons who have previously applied need not reapply. Persons seeking to apply for forest must have the land certified by a forester submitted by Oct. 1st

MANUFACTURING MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT: equipment used in the manufacturing process may be allowed an exemption if certain guidelines are met. A completed application must be filed by November 1st.

NEW COMMERCIAL TRUCKS with a gross rating in excess of 26,000 lbs. should check with the Assessor's Office for tax exemption eligibility. Applications must be completed and filed with the Assessor by November 1st.

LOCAL OPTIONS:

FARM ABATEMENT: An application must be submitted by the land owner annually no later than November 1st.


LOCAL HOMEOWNERS PROGRAM; Homeowners on the regular homeowner program must apply for this annually. Bring income proofs in no later than May 15th.

Most applications can be found on our town website.

FOR QUESTIONS ON ANY OF THESE PROGRAMS PLEASE CALL 228-9555.



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FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

AUDREY CARABEAU

The Eastford Food Pantry is seeking individuals or families who reside in Eastford and are in need of food assistance. Please call Audrey Carabeau at 860-933-7685 to sign up. All referrals are kept confidential. Delivery is available to those who are homebound.

We are located at the Eastford Baptist Church, 133 Union Rd., and open the first Monday of each month from 8-11 a.m. Each shopper is assigned a time slot.

The Eastford Food Pantry relies on donations from the community.

Thank you to all of the generous donors who allow us to fill the shelves. 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 Road Eastford, CT 06242.

Most needed items include tuna, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, pasta, pasta sauce, canned vegetables, canned fruit, crackers, healthy snacks, toiletries.

Thank you for your support.



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Consider joining the Eastford Democratic Town Committee or participating in our programs. Help especially needed with our social media!

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.

Paid for by the Eastford Democratic Town Committee, Robert Williams, Treasurer

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\$100 per ticket - Only 2,500 tickets will be sold!

Online sales only, accepted until Tuesday, December 31, 2024 at 8AM. Winning ticket will be drawn at the museum at 12PM, December 31, 2024. No need to be present. Winner is responsible for all applicable taxes.

Purchase tickets online: <https://neam.org/products/2024-corvette-raffle>

Questions? Please email staff@neam.org or call 860-623-3305.

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Photo by the FDOT, Mergle Hooper, Treasurer, Approved by Pat Boyd

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I'm Merry C. Garrett,

a lifelong resident of eastern Connecticut and decades-long Tolland resident. I'm not a politician; I'm a retired, highly successful director of regulatory insurance technology, small business owner, mom, and experienced civically involved neighbor. I'm running for office because we have waited too long for meaningful, positive, honest change.

The residents of the 35th Senate District deserve a state senator who will put their interests first. I am and always will be on your side! Vote for me and our district will no longer be an afterthought.

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- **Help re-establish our regional hospitals** so we have full emergency and maternity care
- **Address the housing crisis** with quality, affordable housing for homeowners and renters
- **Take care of our seniors & veterans** by giving them and family caretakers more resources
- **Defend women's health** by advocating for the right to choose
- **Support unions and workers** by strengthening benefits and defending the right to organize

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Serving Our Veterans as a State Legislative Leader	✓

VOTE FOR JEFF TO KEEP HIM WORKING FOR YOU AS YOUR STATE SENATOR

Paid for by Jeff Gordon For State Senate, Jeff Marcotte, Treasurer. Approved by Jeff Gordon

Auction proceeds to cover cost of trip to Capital

AUCTION

Continued from pg. 1

Recent trips have also included excursions to Baltimore Orioles baseball games.

Over the years, the Eastford School Auction Committee has led the charge to fundraise for the annual field trip, which costs more than \$1,000 per student, on average. The money goes toward transportation, lodging, food, and other miscellaneous costs.

Auction Committee Co-Chairman Charlie Kernan recently sat down with the Communicator to preview the upcoming auction, which is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 16, starting at 5 p.m., at Eastford Elementary School. The event will feature a live auction, a silent auction, raffle items, food, and a bake sale — all to raise money for the trip. In recent years, the number of auction items has reached north of 100 unique and donated pieces, from gift certificates, to art, hand-crafted items, sports memorabilia, excursion experiences, appliances, and rare items.

“It takes a lot of work to make this happen,” said Kernan, who added that work begins months ahead of time, usually at the end of school in June with a kickoff meeting that begins the process of drumming up engagement and figuring out how to put the auction together. This year, the Auction Committee is co-chaired by Kernan and Jeremy Barlow, who both lead a group of about 12 people in organizing the event.

“We are always looking for more volunteers,” Kernan said. “The more the merrier. It’s a lot of work getting out and building awareness, getting donations. We are appreciative of the people that help us out. It can’t happen without volunteers and parents. We need as much involvement as we can get.”

While fundraising may sometimes be a challenge, small class sizes in recent years have caused the committee to consolidate the trip to include seventh grade students. Such a situation occurred in 2022, so in 2023, the school forewent the trip, which gave the committee more time to fundraise. This year (2025), the committee plans to go back to just sending grade 8, while next year’s trip (2026) is currently planned as a grade 7-8 trip because of the current seventh grade’s smaller class size.

“The cost has become pretty robust,” Kernan said, who said that despite the price tag which seems to rise every year (and currently sits at north of \$1,000 per student), the committee is currently “in a good place” as it pertains to being able to cover the cost for the currently planned eighth-grade trip in May 2025.

“We are lucky that people in town and surrounding towns — the people who live in this community — are so generous,” he said, adding a particular name — David Jakubowski — who Kernan described as a “a pillar of our auction,” as someone he wanted to publicly thank.

As for the auction itself, proceeds are divided on a sliding scale, starting with the eighth grade, then divided amongst grades 5 through 7. This approach allows each class multiple years to fundraise for the trip.

“My goal for the auction is to do better than we did last year,” Kernan said. “Our population is growing, so one of the things that comes with that is a larger expense for the auction itself. This is such a unique tradition to us, [so we hope] to continue to grow as our community grows, and continue this unique tradition.”

On top of the educational value of visiting our nation’s Capital, Kernan added that a large trip like Washington D.C. always seems to have a unifying effect on the students that attend. These effects are hard to quantify, but are very valuable nonetheless.

“It’s something they get to experience together,” he said, mentioning exceptionally powerful moments on recent trips at Ford’s Theater (the site of Abraham Lincoln’s assassination), past war monuments, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and Arlington National Cemetery, which serves as an especially poignant location and local connection for Eastford residents — because it is the location of the gravesite of Eastford hero Joseph E. Phaneuf (SSG U.S. Army), who died in 2006 in Afghanistan.

“Having those moments with their parents and friends that they can cherish for the rest of their lives — pictures and shared

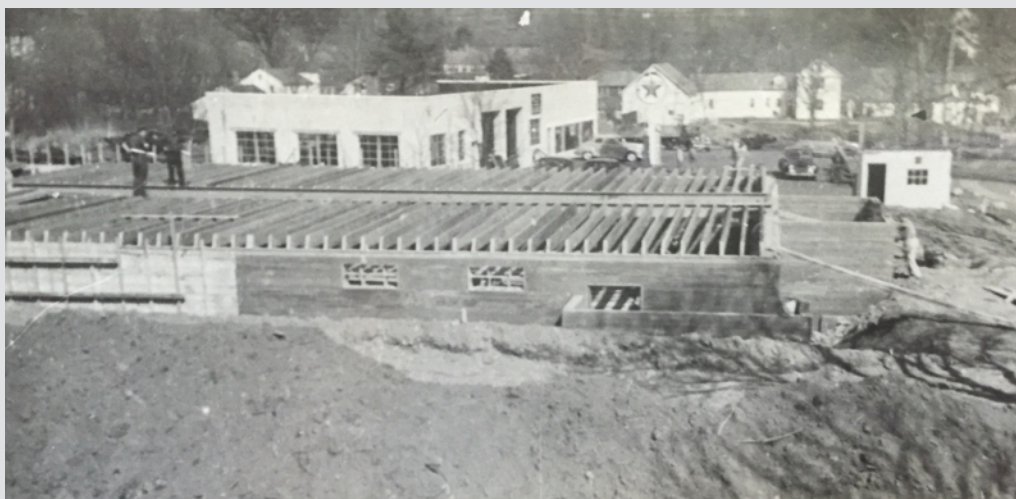
experiences — those are the moments you talk about when you’re older,” he said.

At the end of the day, the Washington, D.C. field trip is an experience that serves as a culmination of the education offered at Eastford Elementary School over nine years, and the auction is designed as the major fundraising event to make it all happen. Kernan said that as of this writing, the committee is “confident” they will reach their goals, but every cent — and every minute of volunteered time — matters.

“People have been responding well,” he said. “We have a great committee. Without them this wouldn’t happen. But we also need parent involvement and donations of time. The more people we have to help out, the more we can put together. The only thing that limits us is the availability of people and the time they have to give. The more people get involved, the more we can spread out.”

For more information on the auction, or to donate time or money to the field trip fund, call the school at (860) 974-1130, or e-mail auction@eastfordct.org.

“If you can, please come out and support the auction,” Kernan said. “As you walk around, you might even find Christmas presents. Walk around, provide a donation — any donation monetarily or through services or products goes toward the wellness of the D.C. trip for Eastford students.”



Early education

EASTFORD — School has been back in session for about a month now. Pictured is Eastford Elementary School under construction in 1949. Back in 1847, there were eight school districts in Eastford with an enrollment of 345 students. By 1927, all students were sent to Center School except for those in Phoenixville. Eventually, all students were going to the Center School and it was determined that a new, larger school was needed. Photo and information provided by the Eastford Historical Society.

Photo courtesy Eastford Historical Society

Traffic to be detoured for bridge reconstruction

BRIDGE

Continued from pg. 1

Local Bridge Program, and will be paid for with a combination of both federal (80 percent) and state (20 percent) funds. There will be no cost to the town. Spending will cover both the construction, planning, and development and execution of rights of way. The design portion, Byrnes said, will be “in full partnership and coordination with the town.”

He added that the DMS program is designed to provide “a streamlined approach to design,” using full CT DOT resources to aid the towns to keep their bridges in a “state of good repair” by effective use of funds, decreasing typical design time, and utilizing accelerated bridge construction (ABC) techniques to shorten construction duration while increasing the number of municipal projects delivered to construction each year.

During the meeting, Byrnes introduced his fellow members of the Project Team, which includes: Bart Sweeney, PE, Division Chief of Bridges for CT DOT; Derick Lessard, PE, Principal Engineer for CT DOT; Michelle Rame, PE, Project Engineer for CT DOT; Kathleen Ericson, Right-of-Way Property Agent, CT DOT; Anand Seshadri, PE, CLE Team CHA; and Stephany Dubina, CLE Team CHA.

According to Dubina, the 27-foot, 7-inch-long Ashford Road bridge, which is designated as “Bridge No. 04645” by CT DOT, is in need of replacement. Bridges in Connecticut are inspected biennially (once every two years), and are given a rating of 1 (imminent failure) to 9 (excellent) in several categories, which include the deck, approach, superstructure, substructure and channel/channel protection. Ratings for the Ashford Road bridge vary by category, ranging from 7 at the highest to 4 at the lowest. The bridge’s railing (5) and guide rail (5) currently do not meet safety standards. Dubina said the bridge is “scour critical.” According to the U.S. Geological Survey, bridge scour is “the process of erosion that occurs when fast-moving water removes sediment from around a bridge’s abutments or piers.” Dubina said the Ashford Road bridge’s existing footings are “undermined and missing sections,” is hydraulically inadequate, and that the substructure is rated “poor.” However, despite the deficiencies, the bridge is considered “safe” by CT DOT, even though it has persisted long past its 75-year service life.

According to CT DOT’s website on the upcoming project, the proposed 58-foot, 6-inch-long structure “will be comprised of

prestressed concrete deck units with a cast-in-place topping slab supported by concrete abutments and flared wingwalls with foundations bearing on bedrock and support a 24[-foot] wide roadway meeting standards. The proposed structure with a 52[-foot]-wide hydraulic opening and the roadway raised by 1 [foot] will eliminate roadway overtopping and provide under-clearance during the 100-year design storm resulting in improved hydraulic adequacy. The project includes installation of new bridge and approach rail system meeting current safety standards and elimination of scour critical condition. Approximately 385 [feet] of roadway reconstruction is proposed including roadway drainage improvements.”

The new bridge, Dubina said, will have a 75-year service life with minimal maintenance, will feature no weight restrictions, and due to the flared wingwalls being on bedrock, it should eliminate all scour concerns. New aesthetic improvements will also be included, including a liner on the concrete that will simulate stones, as well as a metallic bridge rail.

Because the current bridge is also part of the Natchaug Trail, minor adjustments to the trail are also planned to accommodate for the construction of the bridge, including crosswalks for

pedestrians.

Once the project begins in spring 2027, Ashford Road will be closed in both directions for approximately eight months. A detour is currently planned that for drivers on the south side of Bigelow Brook, will mean heading south on Ashford Road and Flooting Road, turning left onto North Road, then left on Route 44, then left on Route 198 to access the center of town. The detour is measured at 8.5 miles.

Right-of-way impacts associated with the proposed project include partial permanent takes (4 properties), a drainage right-of-way (3 properties), permanent slope easements (4 properties), and a temporary construction easement (1 property), along with rights to install gravel pull-offs, relocate a trail, removing and resetting stone walls, installing sediment control systems, and reconstructing a driveway.

Video of the July 16 meeting may be viewed at [https://youtu.be/Yz8SH9Dik70?](https://youtu.be/Yz8SH9Dik70?si=ORpUv_Ema6x8I1Qx)

Project plans may be viewed at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/dot/documents/dprojects/project0038-0085/0038-0085_display_boards.pdf. The project’s official CT DOT website can be viewed at <http://portal.ct.gov/doteastford38-85>.

TOWN OF EASTFORD WARNING OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The legal voters and those qualified to vote at town meetings of the Town of Eastford, Connecticut are hereby warned that a Special Town Meeting will be held in person at the

Eastford Town Office Building, 16 Westford Road, in said town on: Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at 7 p.m.

To consider and act upon the following items:

To act on nominating a Moderator to preside at said meeting.

To act upon an amendment change to the Ordinance Creating a Joint Park Commission for the Town of Eastford and Woodstock,

by amending Section 3, Subsection B to the following:

Quorum. “No business shall be conducted at any meeting of the Commission unless at least six of the ten members, with a minimum of two members from Eastford and a minimum of two members from Woodstock are present at the time the business is conducted. Except as otherwise set forth in this ordinance, an act of the majority of the members present at any meeting shall be an act of the commission.

To act upon an amendment to the Ordinance Establishing Town Plan Commission, Section 2, and to the Ordinance Pertaining to Town Plan

Commission: “Pursuant to the authority granted by Public Act 02-83, the Town of Eastford hereby repeals such provision in all preceding ordinances pertaining to the establishment and membership of the Planning Commission of the Town of Eastford, which disqualifies electors holding salaried Town Office, from membership on said Commission.”

To vote to approve a special appropriation of \$20,000, originally approved in 2021 to breach the Trout Dam, be re-appropriated for a revised Trout Dam project to modify and not breach the Trout Dam at Crystal Pond Park.

Do you have:

- Photos? ☒
- Information? ☒
- Story leads? ☒
- Events to promote? ☒
- Local sports results? ☒
- Press releases? ☒

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