

THE EASTFORD Communicator

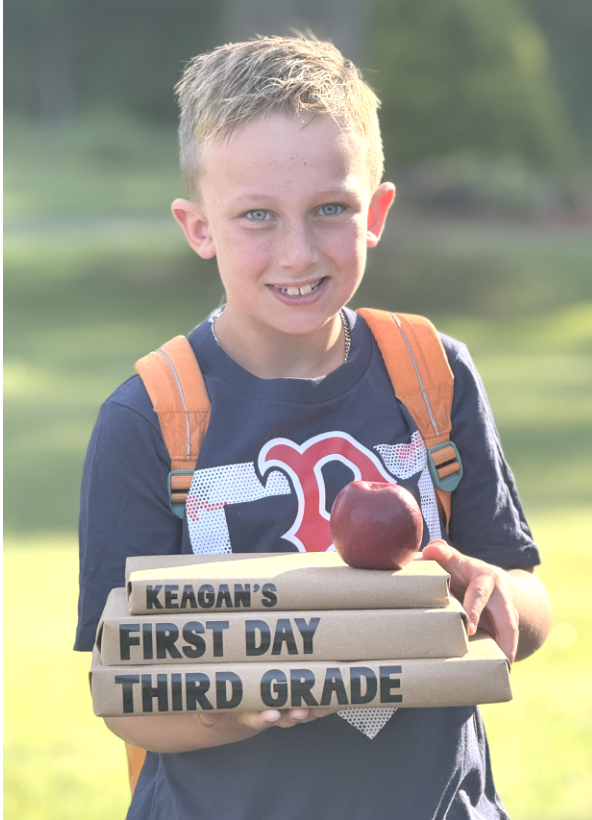


OCTOBER 2025

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

VOL. 34, No. 3

CLASS IS BACK IN SESSION



EASTFORD — Eastford Elementary School kicked off the 2025-26 school year in earnest on Wednesday, Aug. 27, bringing back students for another year of growth and learning. Pictured, Keagan Murphy was ready to start third grade! For more photos, turn to page 12!

Courtesy photo

Registrars announce election information

EASTFORD — The Municipal Election will be held Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Early voting for the Municipal Election starts Monday, Oct. 20 and ends Sunday, Nov. 2. Hours for early voting, most days, will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. On Oct. 28 and Oct. 30, early voting will be held from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Remember that ballots cast during early voting will be opened and

counted on Election Day.

Voter Registration: Deadline to register is Oct. 17. Election Day registration is Nov. 4.

Absentee Ballots: Currently, no excuse absentee balloting is not law, despite the vote last November. Therefore, if you request an absentee ballot, you must have one of the

Turn to **ELECTION**, pg. 18

CELEBRATING LIBERTY



EASTFORD — On Saturday, Sept. 13, the Town of Eastford, the Connecticut Sons of the American Revolution, and Eastford Elementary School hosted a Liberty Tree dedication in honor of the United States Constitution and the 250th anniversary of the United States. For more information and photos, turn to page 10! Courtesy photo

Auction fundraiser returns to support eighth grade D.C. trip

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

EASTFORD — The annual Washington D.C. field trip for Eastford Elementary School eighth graders is an experience of a lifetime for local youth, but it

doesn't come cheap.

That's where the Goods & Services Auction comes in.

This year's auction is slated for Saturday, Nov. 15, and according to Auction Committee Chair Lauren Barlow, locals will have the chance to not only support local

businesses, but ensure that students will be able to create "core memories."

"We're in the home stretch," Barlow told the Communicator. "[The auction is] a community builder. It's a connection builder. I've seen it happen. All the profits

are going to the kids on the trip. It's such a unique educational experience. ... It's special, but it's expensive — and it's not getting cheaper. So, we are hoping to continue to fund it. The more people that come out to support it,

Turn to **AUCTION**, pg. 19

IN
THIS
ISSUE



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BEGINS
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BUELL WINS AT FAIR
PG. 11

THE EASTFORD Communicator

LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1992

VOL. 34, No. 3 | OCTOBER 2025

MANAGING EDITOR: Adam Minor

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Michele Palulis, Chairman; Randal Chinnock, Vice Chairman; Nancy Gingras, Treasurer; Julia Torcellini, Secretary; Arthur Brodeur

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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 15th 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.

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CIRCULATION

The Eastford Communicator is available online at <https://eastford.news/>, and in print, free of charge, to every home in Eastford. Out-of-town subscriptions are available by request, for an annual fee of \$50 (although additional donations are appreciated).

EIFC secures funding for station upgrades

EASTFORD — State Rep. Pat Boyd (D-Pomfret) announced on Sept. 4 that the Eastford Independent Fire Co. has secured \$75,000 in state funding during the 2025 Legislative Session. The Connecticut General Assembly approved this funding as part of the 2026-2027 State Budget.

The funding was allocated to the Eastford Independent Fire Co. for the 2026 Fiscal Year and will be used for necessary repairs and upgrades to the firehouse. This funding is a line item in the State Budget as part of a larger \$647,000 approved for Fiscal Year 2026, allocated to various police and fire departments across the state. The line item was included in the biennial State Budget at the request of Boyd, who serves as House Chairman of the Public Safety & Security Committee.

"The upgrades and repairs to the Eastford Independent Fire [Co.] are essential to ensure the fire department can continue to operate in the building and first responders have access to the resources they need to help residents," Boyd said in a press release. "Things are different in rural areas, and state assistance is welcomed. I am thrilled to see this funding included in the State Budget, approved by the General Assembly this year and signed into law by Gov. Ned Lamont. It is important we continue to provide the necessary funding like this in the

Quiet Corner to assist towns."

Eastford Independent Fire Co. President James Roy outlined some of the concerns this state funding will address.

"This year, the fire department has been faced with crucial structural repairs to the exterior of our building," Roy said. "In an attempt to replace our outdated windows with energy-efficient upgrades, we found significant wood rot around the windows and the wall studs. Upon further inspection by licensed contractors, it was determined that to fix the problem, it would require removing all the vinyl siding, repairing the rotted studs and window frames, and fixing insulation that is either missing or water-damaged. In the process of this, we will upgrade any exposed electrical, and complete the project by replacing all the exterior vinyl siding."

EIFC Chief Doug Beaudoin expressed his appreciation for the funding.

"Thanks to the funding [Boyd] secured for the EIFC, we will be able to replace the siding, insulation, and windows — critical improvements that will enhance the efficiency and condition of our facility," Beaudoin said. "We would not have been able to afford these upgrades without his help. We are truly grateful for his continued support of the Quiet Corner emergency services."



Sometimes, the little things make the biggest difference. "Shout Outs" is your place to celebrate kindness, gratitude, and everyday heroes. Did someone brighten your day? Help without asking? Go the extra mile when no one was watching? Let's tell their story. Share your "shout out" and together, we'll spread some joy — one good deed at a time.

Here's an example of a recent "Shout Out" we received!

Nancy Gingras: "A shout out to Eastford's Public Works Department. I left a voicemail on the department's voicemail about a large pothole on Old Stone Way. The pothole was filled less than 24 hours later! Thank you to our town employees for taking care of that so quickly!"

Send your "shout outs" to Managing Editor Adam Minor at eastfordnews@gmail.com, or send a message to us on our Facebook page. Please keep your messages to 75 words or less. The editor has the right to accept, reject, or edit any submission. Deadline to receive "shout outs" is the 15th of every month before the next publication.

Thank You!

A special thank you to these generous donors who gave a gift of more than \$500 to the Communicator this month!

Tom Latham
*In Memory of
Anne P. Latham*

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Scout Troop 92 enjoys summer camp, outdoor activities



BSA Troop 92 enjoyed a summer season full of activity. Pictured, top left, Cub Scouts recently hiked at Tinkerville Brook Trail in Ashford. At top right, Scouts at Mt. Monadnock at the rainy summit. At lower left, Scouts enjoy dinner at summer camp. At lower right, Scouts play Lumberjack Games at Camp. Courtesy photos

EASTFORD/ASHFORD — BSA Troop 92 meetings will be the same as last year. Cub Scouts will meet at the first Friday of the month at Knowlton Memorial Hall at 6 p.m. New members are welcome.

Scouts recently had a campout at Goodwin State Park. The activity there includes a bicycle ride on the Rail Trail that is nearby. Before the ride a bicycle clinic was held to make sure that

all the bikes were safe to ride. Riders were given instructions on safe Rail Trail riding and etiquette.

Upcoming Events:

- Sunday, Oct 26, 2-4 p.m. Scouts will move unsold books from the Babcock Library book sale to St. Philips Church.

- Tuesday, Oct. 28, 6:30 p.m. Scouts and Cub Scouts together will put together Halloween Scarecrow decorations at the Babcock Library.

- October Campout: TBD
- November Campout: Wolf Den Park, Nov. 7-9

- November: Be on the lookout for Cub Scouts at the Transfer Station accepting non-perishable food item donations to support the local food bank through Scouting for Food program. Discussion of ski trip in January or February.

Spring: Orienteering activities to improve navigation and compass skills.

Scout meetings are on the second and last Tuesdays of the month at St Philip's Recreation Center at 6:30 p.m. New members are welcome.

- Submitted by BSA Troop 92 Eastford/Ashford: Nord Yakovlevff, Assistant Scoutmaster; Jesse Burnham, Scoutmaster; Doug Jenne, Cubmaster; Rob Hany, Committee Chairman; Den Leader Amanda Holden

Quilt project seeks masks to preserve local pandemic history

EASTFORD — A local resident is working to preserve a unique piece of Eastford's history through a community quilt project, and is seeking contributions of the well-known "Martha Masks" to complete it.

In February 2020, Linda Knowles traveled from Florida to Eastford to celebrate Martha Clark's birthday. As she considered returning to Florida, the COVID-19 pandemic rapidly escalated.

"It felt safer to shelter in place here in Eastford than to make the long drive back south," Knowles

said. "Like many others, I found myself in a time of extreme isolation — yet also of neighbors helping neighbors."

At the start of the pandemic, masks were in short supply and difficult to purchase. Martha and Linda decided to help. Together, they made more than 1,400 masks, which were distributed not only throughout Eastford but also across the United States.

"The school received masks, they were available through the church, and there was always a selection of them on the table in Martha's breezeway for anyone in

need," Knowles said. "People often requested certain colors or patterns, which added to the sense of personal connection during an otherwise disconnected time."

This past spring, Knowles said she was inspired to preserve those memories by repurposing the masks into a quilt.

"Each mask is being transformed into a fabric square, creating a lasting artifact of the pandemic era when we were all so careful about social distancing and so mindful of community support," she said.

Most of the masks were given

out locally or to relatives of Eastford residents. To complete the quilt, Knowles is looking for another 70 to 80 "Martha Masks."

"If you still have one, I would be deeply grateful for your contribution," Knowles added. "Masks can be dropped off at the Eastford Town Office Building, and I will make arrangements to collect them."

"Thank you for helping me bring this project to life," Knowles concluded. "I look forward to sharing the finished quilt with our community."

PELL Fall Ball season begins with combined no-hitter in second game

POMFRET — On Monday, Sept. 8, the Pomfret Eastford Little League (PELL) celebrated opening night of their annual Fall Ball season. The PELL Minors team lost a 4-1 decision against Putnam. PELL currently has three Fall Ball teams, Minors Baseball and two co-ed coach pitch baseball teams, as well as a few softball players playing for other towns. On Wednesday, Sept. 10, left-handers Weston Bell and Calan Gaudette combined to throw a no-hitter in their minors 4-0 win against Mansfield.



At left, from left, PELL Minors teammates Weston Bell (also pictured at middle), Thomas Huff, Kirk Biancardi, Calan Gaudette, Tim Dyer, Fredek Nagy, and Caiden Nesanelis, pose for a photo during their Fall Ball opening night matchup against Putnam. At right, catcher Chance Mador stretches for the tag at home base. Courtesy photos

WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE EASTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY?

Eastford Public Library strives to serve the needs of our community by providing an inviting space to inspire and support a life-long love of reading. The school year has begun, and I look forward to seeing our Eastford Elementary students for monthly story times. These visits truly encompass our goal of promoting literacy in the community.

Our library is lucky enough to have Jody Blanchette, "bookstagrammer"

extraordinaire, and our Library Board chair. Her outreach allows us the opportunity to hold many Author Talks. This month, Jody will host a Murder Mystery Mania author event with not one — but four — amazing authors. Sarah Stewart Taylor, Lucy Burdette, Sarah Strohmeyer, and return author Tessa Wegert (pictured here with Jody) will be here Saturday, Oct. 25, at 1 p.m. If you are interested in attending, please stop in or call to register.

Library hours are Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. You may reach us at (860) 974-0125, or by e-mail at eastfordpublib@gmail.com.

Upcoming events and programs can be seen on the town page or on social media. If you haven't yet, please follow Eastford Public Library on Facebook and/or Instagram @eastfordpubliclibrary.



FROM THE GROVE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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' by 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 reads: "...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.

EASTFORD GROVE CEMETERY PERPETUAL CARE DONATION FORM

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

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Gift in memory of _____



NEWS FROM THE CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The Eastford Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission (ECHPC) is a small but energetic group of people in town dedicated to conserving our natural resources and promoting and preserving the historic character of Eastford and surrounding communities.

Some examples of our activities:

This spring, we cleared the Boston Turnpike Trail and made repairs to the footbridge off Crams Road. More recently, we cleared the George Askew Trail behind Eastford Elementary School, which included trail maintenance, invasive plant control and shoring up of the foot bridge near the mill pond. The bridge is in need of replacing and we will be working towards that in the upcoming year.

Also this year, working with the town, we prepared a management plan for the capped landfill at the Transfer Station, which includes a mowing schedule and invasive plant control to promote native plants and enhance wildlife habitat. Similarly, the pollinator garden near the Town Office Building is being maintained and we will work with teachers and students at EES to promote pollinators and native plants.

Another significant achievement this year was mapping the historic stone walls in town. Working with Ethan Berriault, a local cartographer and "GIS whiz," we were able to complete a pilot study started by

UConn to map historic stone walls in Connecticut. Did you know there are over 240 miles of stone walls in Eastford? This project is a continuation of work started by author and UConn Professor Robert Thorson, who spoke last year at EES. The completed maps will be printed and added to the GIS land use coverage found at the Town Office Building and Eastford Public Library.

The Commission also works to preserve open space in town. To that end, and working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, we were able to preserve in perpetuity some beautiful farmland at the north end of town.

Finally, several members have gotten involved in the Natchaug Healthy Watershed Protection Plan. This 2-year project is funded through an US EPA Clean Water Act Sec. 319 NPS grant in partnership with the CT DEEP and is being administered through the Eastern CT Conservation District (ECCD). It includes the eight towns that are included in the Natchaug River Watershed. There are a number of work groups that will report to an Advisory Group and will work to promote and educate the public on best management practices for activities that happen in the watershed (which is about everything). Work group topics include everything from sound forest management practices, to pollinator and rain gardens, to healthy farming practices, to municipal and residential



This past spring, members of the Eastford Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission worked to clear the George Askew Trail behind Eastford Elementary School, which included trail maintenance, invasive plant control and shoring up of the foot bridge near the mill pond. day. Courtesy photos



stormwater and wastewater treatment.

To find out more, please contact the ECCD District Conservationist Maura Robie at maura.robie@comcast.net. We encourage you to come to one of our monthly meetings, held the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the basement of the Town Office Building (unless otherwise posted).

Do you have:

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

We'll take it!

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LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1992

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Our next issue will be published on:

Nov. 1

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

Oct. 15

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FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF EASTFORD: MIKE MORAN

A guiding light for our church family is to bless our terrific community. We do this as servants of Jesus, knowing that He loves you all and wants you to flourish.

One area of community life we really care about is blessing young families. To that end, we will be offering a parenting course in partnership with the Eastford School entitled "Raising Highly Capable Kids." This is a proven, 13-week program created to help build stronger families by giving parents and caregivers the confidence, tools, and skills they need to raise healthy, caring, and responsible children. The basic idea is that when we know what our kids

need to grow and mature, we are much better at parenting. The course is derived from The Search Institute's four decades of study of more than 4 million kids. The study developed a list of the building blocks every child needs to grow and mature. The more of these assets that children possess, the more healthy behaviors and positive results they will have in life. In this class parents will learn what these assets are and develop their own strategies for how best to put them to work in the lives of their kids.

Here is how it will work. The program will run Tuesdays beginning Oct. 14 through Dec. 2,

and after a holiday break Jan. 27 through Feb. 24. We will meet in the Family Activity Center at Eastford Baptist Church as our new building is under construction. We will gather at 5:30 p.m. for a meal for you and your children. Then, we will provide childcare so that the adults can meet from 6-7:30 p.m. The format facilitated presentation and discussion led by certified instructors. There is no religious content. There is no charge for the program. Please register at cceastford.org/events.

Here are some testimonials about the course:

"Taking this weekly course has been one of the best decisions I've

made this year. I remember coming to the meeting feeling defeated yet leaving feeling brand new." -Mom

"The classes helped me learn how to treat others, how to treat my wife and children better. And now I'm another person, a good person. My life has changed completely. It's an excellent program." -Father

"The course was valuable in two ways: first, as a very useful resource in understanding what child developmental assets are and why they are important; and secondly, group members naturally became a good support for one another and offered many positive suggestions! Thanks for bringing it!" -Participant

THE PASTOR'S PEN: TIMOTHY R. HOWARD JR.

When we look around at our world today, it's easy to see the darkness. News headlines are filled with division, hatred, and violence. Many people feel isolated, overlooked, and unloved. Compassion seems to be in short supply. Yet in the midst of this brokenness, God gives us a clear answer — love.

The Bible tells us, "God is love" (1 John 4:8), and it calls us to reflect His love in our daily lives. Jesus declared, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a

hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14). In other words, in a world that often feels dark, the love of Christ shining through His people is meant to push back the shadows.

This is not a love that's shallow or sentimental. It's the kind of love described in 1 Corinthians 13 as "patient, kind, not self-seeking." It's the kind of love Jesus showed when He laid down His life for us (Romans 5:8), and it's the kind of love our community desperately needs today. Neighbors caring for

neighbors, families forgiving each other, and friends standing together in hard times.

At Eastford Baptist Church, we want to be a place where that kind of love grows and spreads. We know we're not perfect, but we believe God's love changes hearts, restores relationships, and brings hope even in the darkest days. That's why we gather, not just to worship, but to encourage one another and to be equipped to share God's love with the world.

We would love for you to join us

for our Sunday School and Adult Bible class at 9:15 a.m., for our worship at 10:30 a.m., or for our Wednesday activities at 6:30 p.m. (Olympians kids club, Teen Club, Prayer Meeting, and Women's Bible Study). Come as you are. Whether you are weary, searching, or simply curious, you will find a warm welcome and the love of Christ shared openly. Together, we can shine His light and spread His love because in a world of darkness, love is exactly what we need most.

IN THE GARDEN: SUSAN BURNS

As you drive or walk around the area during these beautiful autumn days, you will notice bright colors throughout the forests and beside the highways. I'm not talking about the foliage on the maples, birches, oaks, etc. I am talking about all the invasive plants taking over our lands. These invasives are pushing out our native witch hazels, blueberries, huckleberries, etc.

The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group has announced Connecticut's official list of invasive plants. I will mention some of the worst invasives now so that if you have them in your yard, you will take steps to eradicate them before they spread any further. Non-native species are those that are alien to the ecosystem. They can cause harm

to the environment and in some cases, to human health.

Japanese Barberry, which can have red or green foliage depending upon the species available, is a top contender. It has escaped our gardens and is becoming common throughout our land. Not only is it invasive, it is a tick magnet. If you have it in your yard, you likely have a tick problem.

Here is a quote from CleanNorth (a North American Indigenous Peoples Organization): "Japanese Barberry is a popular low-maintenance shrub that comes with a steep hidden cost. It is an invasive species that not only can disrupt ecosystems, but also cause Lyme disease. If you have any Barberry on your property,

dispose of it in the trash and replace it with a native shrub. Reducing Barberry reduces backlegged ticks and Lyme disease risk."

Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*) can easily take over a landscape. Folks love it because of its brilliant red foliage in fall. But remove it and replace it with Blueberry. This is a native plant which also produces gorgeous red foliage and whose fruit you and the birds will love.

One of the worst invasives you will see beside roadways, in ditches, along fence lines, and in wetlands in Connecticut is Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*). This plant has been noted to damage households by growing through concrete cracks! It is so incredibly invasive that

we must do all we can to get rid of it.

Other invasives on the Connecticut Invasive Plant List are Norway Maple, European Buckthorn, Reed Canary Grass, and European Privet. These and some others will be prohibited from sale by Connecticut nurseries soon.

Here are some shrubs that you can grow instead of these horrendous plants: Buttonbush, Blueberry, Chokeberry, Nannyberry, Ninebark, Red Osier Dogwood, Sandcherry, and Snowberry.

Please do yourself and our environment a favor and remove the invasives from your property. Their aggressive growth habit can out-compete and displace our native species.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT: DONNA LEAKE

"The Bulldog Way." These words are appearing in various locations at Eastford Elementary School. The three Cs (3Cs) of the Bulldog Way summarize the expectations of being a staff member or a student at Eastford Elementary School.

The Bulldog Way is grounded in the 3Cs:

- Challenging ourselves (Student Growth and Achievement)
- Caring for each other (Positive Climate and Culture)
- Connecting with Family and Community (Communication and partnerships)

For staff, the expectations of these 3Cs are highlighted in the EES Strategic Plan:

- Focus Area 1: Student Growth and Achievement (Challenging): We will implement an engaging, challenging curriculum, aligned with the Eastford Portrait of a Learner, that supports all students in becoming independent learners.

• Focus Area 2: Positive Climate and Culture (Caring): We will foster a nurturing and caring environment for students and staff, building the skills and knowledge needed for social-emotional growth.

• Focus Area 3: Communication and Partnerships (Communicating): We will develop and maintain supportive and engaging relationships with families and community partners that enhance growth and learning.

For students the expectations of the 3Cs are captured in the Portrait of an Eastford Learner.

All graduates of EES are expected to develop Habits of Success; recognize their responsibilities as a Global Citizen; become Creative Problem Solvers, Effective Collaborators, Effective Communicators, and Critical Thinkers.

Together, all staff and students, focusing on the 3Cs supports the Eastford Elementary School Vision Statement:

At Eastford, we envision a thriving community where every student is at the heart of their own learning journey. Our commitment is to foster a nurturing environment of care, characterized by positive relationships and open communication. By implementing practices aligned with Core Standards and the Eastford Portrait of a Learner, we aim to support and celebrate each student's unique development. Together, we will build a supportive, inclusive community where every learner is empowered to achieve their fullest potential.

I hope this brief synopsis of The Bulldog Way highlights the passionate, collaborative, commitment to the highest quality of learning that exists at Eastford Elementary School. As always, you are invited to contact me at dleake@eastfordct.org if you have questions or concerns and/or would like to schedule an appointment.

FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN: DEB RICHARDS

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is developing plans to replace municipally owned and maintained post-mounted sheet aluminum speed limit signs on municipally owned rural roads. All existing speed limit signs along roadways included in this project will be replaced with new, retroreflective signs to ensure proper placement and compliance with current federal guidelines.

CTDOT states that the fatality rate on rural roads has increased over the past two years. Additionally, from 2020 to 2021, 19 percent of all crashes were speeding related. As such, one of the state's safety initiatives is to replace speed limit signs on higher-risk rural roads to increase visibility, ensure compliance with standards, and assist with enforcement efforts. CTDOT will coordinate with the towns during

the design phase. The design plans for this project are expected to be completed in October, with a tentative advertising date for construction of December. Eastford will be receiving 90 new speed limit/safety signs. Connecticut State Police Troop D has been contacted to request increased patrols on Eastford roads.

The Public Works Supervisor and the First Selectman attended a

Safe Streets 4 All meeting to talk about dangerous intersection and roads in Eastford. The focus of this meeting was to speak about what can be done to improve roads safety in Eastford.

Eastford will be receiving two more digital signs funded by the State of Connecticut. These signs will be placed on roads to monitor speeds, to collect speeding data and to slow down drivers on our rural roads.

EASTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY: DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the Eastford Historical Society Annual Meeting was held on Thursday, Sept. 4, in the lower level of the Town Office Building? We were pleasantly surprised to see such a great turnout at our meeting/presentation. Every seat in the house was filled!

Of special note, at the conclusion of the business meeting, officers

for the new year were elected as follows:

- President: Phil Finch
- Vice President: Linda Torgeson
- Secretary: Toni Doubleday
- Treasurer: Heather Douglas
- Historian: Tom Latham

The business meeting was followed by a very informative, well-researched, slide show presentation by Phil Finch

documenting the history of the Air Line Trail. The presentation was very well received by all in attendance! At the conclusion of the presentation, members and guests gathered to enjoy conversation and refreshments.

We were very pleased to receive positive comments from numerous attendees.

Please consider showing your

support by becoming a member of the Eastford Historical Society. Membership forms may be found on the bulletin board in the Eastford Post Office.

Also, we invite you to visit the Historical Society Museum located at 65 John Perry Rd., open every second and fourth Sunday, from 2 to 4 p.m., May through October.



WE WANT YOU!

BREAKING

NEWS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Ask us how **YOU** can get involved with the *Communicator* today!



FROM THE EASTFORD INDEPENDENT FIRE COMPANY #1 INC.



Welcome fall — it's time to start thinking about seasonal preparations to keep your families safe.

The EIFC responded to 28 "911" emergencies in July and 21 in August.

Fire apparatus is not the only annual mandatory testing that needs to take place. In accordance with NFPA 1582, an annual physical, completed by an approved company doctor is scheduled. This comprehensive health assessment is designed to ensure that firefighters and EMS are fit for duty, helping to maintain a healthy workforce by identifying potential health risks, and ensuring that each member is

physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of performing their duties safely.

Fire Prevention Week (FPW) 2025 is Oct. 5-11. Fire Prevention Week has a history. Since 1922, the NFPA has sponsored a public observance of FPW. In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed FPW a national observance, making it the longest-running public health observance in our country. During FPW, children and adults learn how to stay safe in case of a fire. FPW is in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on Oct. 8, 1871.

The EIFC provides lifesaving public education at the Eastford School annually in an effort to help reduce casualties caused by fires. Members, in full turnout gear, visit the school, plan a timed evacuation scenario, watch a video about fire safety and of course "goodie bags" given to the children. The fire trucks are there permitting the students to check out the equipment, see the lights flashing, and hear the sirens. The

intent of this visit is to assure students that firemen and medical technicians are their "friends."

In a fire, mere seconds can mean the difference between a safe escape and a tragedy. It is important for every member of the community to take time to make sure they understand how to stay safe, prepare an escape route, and to make sure they have the resources needed to keep the family, and town safe. Changing the batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide monitors when the clock changes is recommended.

Ready today, preparing for tomorrow: Since fall is here, winter can't be far behind. It is time to prepare! Part of this process is to assure that your green house number signs are clearly visible from the road. It is important to post a second set of house number signs if you share a common driveway with two or more houses. Time is of the essence when we are responding to a specific location. Green number signs with white reflective

numbers are free. Stop by the station any Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. to get your signs and numbers.

To assure prompt and efficient transfer of medical information between patient, fire company, ambulance and hospital, it is essential that a document is provided to the responders listing what your health issues are, what medications you take, for what purpose, prescribed and over the counter, what dose, and known allergies. This information will be passed on to the transporting ambulance to the receiving hospital emergency room.

It is the mission of the EIFC to provide prompt and efficient service to the Town of Eastford. If you want to make a difference in your town, consider joining the 100-percent volunteer fire department. New members are welcomed. A tax-deductible donation can be sent to the EIFC, P.O. Box 333, Eastford, CT 06242.

-Submitted by Jeannine Spink



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ATTENTION

OUT-OF-TOWN RESIDENTS

There is an annual \$50 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 \$50 to *Eastford Communicator*, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242. We must receive payment no later than Oct. 15.



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

eastford.news

CALENDAR

Calendar entries must be submitted before the 15th of the month preceding publishing. Please send all calendar content to eastfordnews@gmail.com, and limit submissions to less than 100 words. All entries are subject to editing at the editor's discretion.

OCTOBER

Thursday, Oct. 2

Eastford Public Library hosts "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Tuesday, Oct. 7

Eastford Public Library hosts "Homeschool Hour" at 10:30 a.m. After a summer hiatus our popular homeschooling group will resume on the first Tuesday of every month. Join us as we discuss optical illusions! Please register as there is limited space available.

Wednesday, Oct. 8

Eastford Public Library hosts "Maker's Night" from 6 to 7:30 p.m. This is the third session in our four-part series where Dan Belanger will demonstrate using a Cricut to set up a screen-printing frame. Want to learn how to create something unique? Please join us!

Thursday, Oct. 9

Eastford Public Library hosts "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Thursday, Oct. 16

Eastford Public Library hosts "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. At 5 p.m. the Friends of the Eastford Public Library will have their monthly meeting. All are welcome to attend.

Saturday, Oct. 18

The Last Green Valley (TLGV) hosts their annual Walktober events throughout the month of October! In Eastford, Emeritus State Archaeologist Nick Bellantoni will lead a hike through the Lyon family homestead's farm and mill stone ruins on Oct. 18. Amasa Lyon operated a sawmill on Beaverdam Brook and his son, Nathaniel Lyon, was the first Union officer killed during the Civil War. A truly historic hike through the lens of stone ruins. Rain or shine! Registration required. Sponsored by Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, csmnh.uconn.edu. Natchaug State Forest, Eastford. Meeting location and parking information will be

sent to registered participants three days before walk. Register at s.uconn.edu/ruinsct2025.

Eastford Public Library hosts a "Halloween Picture Frame" children's craft at 10:30 a.m. Please register for this event.

Tuesday, Oct. 21

Eastford Public Library hosts "Grim Reader's Book Club" at 6 p.m. We will be discussing "Agony Hill" by Sarah Stewart Taylor and "An Appetite for Murder" by Lucy Burdette as we prepare for our Author Talk on Oct. 25. Both books are on display and available to check out.

Wednesday, Oct. 22

Eastford Public Library hosts the final session in our four-part series on personalizing items from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tonight Dan Belanger will be demonstrating the process of sublimation. Please join us!

Thursday, Oct. 23

Eastford Public Library hosts "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. Join us at 5 p.m. for our annual fundraiser, "Adopt A Book". If you are unable to attend, the remainder of the books will continue to be on display and available to purchase for donation to the library.

Saturday, Oct. 25

Eastford Public Library hosts a "Murder Mystery Mania Author Event" at 1 p.m. Sarah Stewart Taylor, Lucy Burdette, Sarah Strohmeier and return author Tessa Wegert will be in cozy conversation with Jody Blanchette. Light refreshments will be served. Registration for this event is required.

Thursday, Oct. 30

Eastford Public Library hosts "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Friday, Oct. 31

Happy Halloween! Eastford Public Library will be hosting a "Haunted Library" for families from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Please stop in.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

August: 3

MARRIAGES

August: 1

DEATHS

August: 2

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

July 8: 29 Ashford Rd., \$70,000, Stephen H. Putnam to Crissy Stinson

July 9: 261 Old Colony Rd., \$158,884, Carol K. Davidge to Nationstar Mortgage LLC

July 15: 75 County Rd., \$450,000, Alicia Ploughman to Jose Abraham

July 23: Union Rd., \$144,676, Paul L. Blair to State of Connecticut

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS

Sunday, Oct. 5: Recreation Commission/Experience Eastford Special Meeting, 4 p.m., Town Office Building

Monday, Oct. 6: Board of Selectmen, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

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

Wednesday, Oct. 8: Crystal Pond Park Commission, 6 p.m., Crystal Pond Park, 305 Crystal Pond Rd., Woodstock, CT 06281

Thursday, Oct. 9: Board of Education, 6 p.m., Eastford Elementary School Library; Bowen's Field Committee, 6 p.m., Town Office Building

Tuesday, Oct. 14: Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m., Town Office Building

Thursday, Oct. 23: Library Board of Trustees, 6:30 p.m., Eastford Public Library; Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

EASTFORD SCHOOL CHILD FIND NOTICE

In accordance with state and federal law, Eastford School staff can conduct Child Developmental Screenings for children ages 3-5 years old. Areas of screening include health, vision, speech, hearing, growth, development, physical motor, learning/cognitive skills, and social-emotional/behavioral skills. If you have a child who is not currently enrolled in our school and you have concerns about your child's development, please e mail me or call (860) 974-1130 to make an appointment. Charles Kernan, Director of Pupil Services, Eastford School, or e-mail at pupilservices@eastfordct.org.



Check out the next edition of the *Communicator* for a full recap of the 2025 EES Bulldogs soccer season! Check out results as they happen after every game on our Facebook!



Liberty tree planting honors history of the United States

EASTFORD — The 250th anniversary of the United States is being celebrated in style. On Saturday, Sept. 13, the Connecticut Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), in collaboration with the Town of Eastford, gathered at Eastford Elementary School to host a Liberty Tree dedication. The planting of the tree is part of the mission of SAR to plant 250 Liberty Trees for America's 250th anniversary, which is coming up on July 4, 2026. It also honors the United States Constitution and Constitution Week Sept. 17-23. The event included a presentation of a granite marker and an Honor Guard in full Revolutionary-War-era uniforms.

Courtesy photos



FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

AUDREY CARABEAU

We are here to help! The Eastford Food Pantry is located at the Eastford Baptist Church, 133 Union Rd., in Eastford.

October pantry hours are Monday, Oct. 6, 8-11 a.m. and Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2-4 p.m. We serve Eastford residents who are in need of supplemental food assistance. All guests are treated with confidentiality.

Thank you so much to all who have donated food, money or home goods to the pantry. We welcome donations of non-expired, non-perishable food, toiletries, new home goods and monetary gifts to help us continue serving our neighbors. Every can and dollar makes a difference! Drop off locations are Bowen's Garage and the Eastford Town Office Building.

For questions or to arrange donations, call (860) 933-7685, or e-mail Food Pantry Coordinator Audrey Carabeau at acarabeau@yahoo.com. Monetary donations may be sent to Eastford Food Pantry, 16 Westford Rd., Eastford, CT 06242.

Together we can ensure that no one goes hungry in Eastford!



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BUELL EARNS TOP HONORS

WOODSTOCK — Connor Buell, of Eastford, earned top prize at the Woodstock Fair's Open Dairy Show Saturday, Aug. 30, earning the Grand Champion Milking Shorthorn prize along with the Grand Champion Jersey prize in the Youth Dairy Show. Photo courtesy Woodstock Fair.

TIPS FOR TODAY LIZ ELLSWORTH

Happy Autumn!

Connecticut Audubon and Mass Audubon do a lot of similar nature programs, promote learning about state-specific wildlife (flora and fauna), and offer many educational tools via their websites.

One learning tool I really like is the monthly outdoor almanac that Mass Audubon publishes each month. It's easy to take a quick glance at it before heading outside, or a simple way to engage youngsters and teens into learning about seasonal changes (September and October's bird migration patterns, flowering plants and mushrooms, moon phases, fall foliage, critters gathering food for hibernation, etc.). You can print the outdoor almanac from the Mass Audubon website at the beginning of each month or view it online via their social media platforms.

Look for the most recent outdoor almanac here: <https://www.massaudubon.org/nature-wildlife/outdoor-almanac>

For current nature events with the Connecticut Audubon, go here: <https://www.ctaudubon.org/calendar/>.



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Eastford students go back to school for a new year

EASTFORD — And just like that, summer is over. Eastford Elementary School welcomed its students back to class on Wednesday, Aug. 27, providing plenty of opportunities for parents to snap some pictures of their kids as they embarked on another year of learning. With this in mind, The *Communicator* asked its readers to submit their best “back to school” photos of their kids, and you did not disappoint! From all of us at the *Communicator*, we wish all students a fantastic year back at school! *Courtesy photos*



At left, A'vriella and Oaklen Barber pose for a photo before entering EES for the first time this year. A'vriella started second grade, while Oaklen started kindergarten. At right, Reese and Rory Ball were ready to go on day one! Reese started second grade while Rory started fifth grade.



Hayleigh Wooding was ready for her first day, and her mother, Christa, made sure to send along the following message as well: “Our Hayleigh is ‘blooming’ into 5th grade this year! She may be heading off to class, but she still stopped to ‘petal’ around with the hydrangeas on her first day. With her Crocs in full charm mode and a backpack big enough to ‘leaf’ nothing behind, she’s ready to grow, learn, and blossom all year long.”



Mila Vinal started her first day of preschool, as she was sent off by Lily!



From left, Liv, Grace, and Anna Moore were all smiles as they headed off to school on their first day.



Cora Cote (Kindergarten) and her brother Cal (2nd Grade) were excited to go back to school.



Emmett, Hope, and Levi McGurl were in a silly mood for the camera as they got ready for the first day of school. Emmett and Hope started fourth grade, while Levi started second grade.



Joey and Corey Arpin were excited to go back to school. Joey started second grade, while Corey started in Pre-K.



Declan Scranton was ready for his first day of second grade. His sister, Allison, can't wait to begin preschool next year.

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Hello! My name is

Meghan Martinez

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for the open seat on Eastford's Library Board.



My grandmother was a school teacher and my mother was a college librarian. The possibility of serving on the Library Board not only fulfills a personal desire to help better our town but also builds upon a family tradition of safeguarding libraries as cultural pillars within a community.

My background:

- Former mental health clinician
- Current cybersecurity professional
- Within both fields, enjoyed successful collaboration with local, state, and federal government officials

Vote for me for the Eastford Public Library Board of Trustees seat on November 4th!

EASTFORD LIBRARY BOARD CANDIDATES



Armen Beermann has lived in Eastford for 37 years. He has designed and managed construction of \$.5 billion in library projects for CT State higher education institutions and knows how libraries are run on many different levels. Armen, a highly decorated full Colonel in the US Air Force, retired after 34 years of service to his country.



Mary Roto Degostin has lived in Eastford her entire life. She is raising her family here and hopes they will do the same. Mary works as a reading interventionist for Woodstock Schools and is passionate about bringing books to younger students as well as adults. Mary's goal is to see the library as a welcoming place that the community takes pride in.



Seth Budd has lived in Eastford his entire life. He is a legacy library board member, following his grandmother in serving on the library board. He feels that the library is a home away from home. Seth has a bachelor's degree in accounting, works for Eastford school as a paraprofessional, and is working to earn his education certificate.

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Sitting (L to R): Johanna Wolfe, Deb Richards, Paul Torcellini, Christine Hustus
 Standing (L to R): Mary Degostin, Seth Budd, Chris Bowen, Steve Bowen,
 Armen Beermann, Martha Burgess Not Pictured: Lauren Barlow, Nate Fabian

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Paul Torcellini- Selectman

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Steve Bowen- Board of Ed

Chris Bowen- Constable

Nate Fabian- Constable

Armen Beerman- Library Trustee

Seth Budd- Library Trustee

Mary Degostin- Library Trustee

Christine Hustus- Tax Collector

Johanna Wolfe- Town Clerk

Martha Burgess- Treasurer

WINDHAM-TOLLAND 4-H CAMP NEWS: HEATHER LOGEE

On Oct. 18, we will be holding our 4th Annual Fall Extravaganza from 2-4 p.m.

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. Admission is \$5 per person ages 2 and up. Your admission fee will allow you to enjoy s'mores and hot chocolate at the fire pit by the pond. We will have other games to keep our visitors occupied and some sweet

treats will be for sale. The donut eating contest is always a hit. Children aged 2 and up can also 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. 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.

It may be old news, but we were delighted to have State Rep. Pat Boyd and Gov. Ned Lamont stop by and visit Director Heather Logee at the camp's booth at the Woodstock Fair in September. Gov. Lamont got lucky with our "wheel of fortune" and won some WT4H camp merchandise.

The Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp is located at 326 Taft Pond Rd., Pomfret Center. Call us at (860) 974-1122 or visit www.4hcampct.org.



Municipal Election info from the Registrar of Voters

ELECTION

Continued from pg. 1

currently allowed excuses — military service, being out of town on Election Day (at college, etc.), illness, religious reasons, disability, or service as an election official or worker.

Absentee ballots need to be

received before the close of Election Day. Make sure to plan ahead if you are mailing in your absentee ballot due to potential lags in the United States Postal Service.

New Voting Machines: The state has instituted new voting machines. These should not be difficult for people to use, and you will still have the same kind of

ballots that were used in the past. If you are concerned about the new machines, come early to vote or stop by during the Registrar's office hours, which are on the second and fourth day of the month. Voting officials and your registrars will be happy to walk you through the process.

Questions? Contact your

Registrars or Eastford Town Clerk at the Eastford Town Office Building or Eastford Registrars. Call (860) 974-1885, or stop by during office hours.

Can you help us? We are looking for people to help during the early voting period. Contact the Town Office Building and let us know if you would like to help.



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EES Good and Services Auction set for next month

AUCTION

Continued from pg. 1

the better.

The event itself is loaded with activity, featuring both a silent and live auction, as well as a raffle, with items and services donated by residents and businesses from all over New England. On top of that, a bake sale led by Kirstin Budd will satisfy the sweet tooth. Pizza will also be available for purchase from Pizza 101.

At the time of publication, just over six weeks remain until the event. Planning happens year-round, but at this point in the process, the committee is finalizing donations and making final preparations for the event.

"So far, so good," Barlow remarked when asked how donations were going. "We are hoping to get all our donations in by Nov. 1, so that way our wonderful teacher and parent volunteers who are processing them can do that. We will take

donations at any point, but it would be nice to get them in by Nov. 1."

Several residents and local businesses in Eastford and surrounding towns have already given their support with gift card donations for the raffle, or services offered for the auction. Barlow said that other, more regional attractions like Whale's Tail Waterpark (Lincoln, N.H.), Lake Compounce Amusement & Water Park (Bristol, Conn.) and Six Flags New England (Agawam, Mass.) have donated, as well as other organizations from around New England.

"We are so grateful to all those who want to make a donation," she said, adding that the auction is more than just a benefit for students — it also benefits the businesses that participate.

"There might be people who don't know about a specific business, but if you win a gift card to a place, you're more likely to go, and if you're happy, you'll go back," Barlow said. "At

the end of the day, the auction helps everyone out."

More unique experiences are also offered during the live auction. In previous years, offerings like "Principal for a Day" at EES, reserved Graduation seating, and "Pie a Board of Education member in the face" offer fun, memorable experiences that also bring in major funds for the trip. The idea is to attract as many people to the event as possible.

"The more people come to it, odds are it will be a successful event," Barlow said. "We really want to reach more people than last year. The goal is to reach more and more people. We are really hoping people come to check us out. You are supporting our students directly with a core experience of their lives. It's super fun. It's a fun event, and a great way to do Christmas shopping, too. You're supporting local businesses and students at the same time with a family-friendly event."

In the month leading up to the auction, the committee hopes to utilize the "Eastford School Auction" Facebook page to feature weekly big-ticket items. Students and staff at EES are also directly involved, with many staff, and students (with their families) providing themed baskets and other items.

"Shout out to the staff at Eastford School. We have awesome staff who group together and put together baskets or items up for auction," Barlow said.

This year's Goods and Services Auction will be held Saturday, Nov. 15, with doors opening at 5 p.m. For more information, or to inquire about donating an item for the auction, contact the committee at auction@eastfordct.org.

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