This month we put Haddam's proposed FY2020 Town Budget under a microscope with the intent of providing readers information on how the budgets impact the future of Haddam and the personal checkbooks of its residents.

Despite continuing uncertainty regarding state grants and funding, residents will be thrilled to know that Eversource's huge multi-year project to upgrade equipment at its Haddam substations will continue to generate a windfall of tax revenue—an amount in excess of $1,000,000—providing much-needed funds to the town's coffers next year.

In addition, the board of education's (BOE) proposed budget cuts will reduce Haddam's share of running the school district by $378,065 (-1.5%).

That budget reduction results mainly from the school board's controversial decision to close the Haddam Elementary School (HES) in Higganum Village later this year and in part from the surplus of unused funds from the previous year.

These financial tailwinds may not be enough to offset increases that town officials are proposing for next year, including borrowing another $7+ million dollars to finance future capital projects.

Based on the best information available at press time, if residents approved the proposed BOE school and BOF government budgets, next year's proposed town budget (school and government) will be: $32,424,808—an increase of $455,985 (+1.4%) over the current year (Exhibit 1, page 7).

Continued on pg. 5
Letters

Why We Have Chosen to Vote NO to RSD17’s Proposed Budget

Providing quality education for our children is a core service for any community. Those who have signed this letter live in the towns represented in RSD17 and many have had children in our school system. We believe in education. More pertinent, we believe in public education and the value it lends to our communities and our future.

So why are we voting NO to the proposed school budget this year?

Normally, if the budget is voted down, the BOE and RSD17 administration receives that denial as a message that their budget is too high. Typically, the superintendent and Board of Education will go back to the drawing board and impose cuts, because this is how a “no” vote is interpreted.

But what if, for this vote, that is a misinterpretation? Is it possible that a large percentage of voters are choosing to vote NO this year for a different reason?

Many in Haddam and Killingworth have shown strong opposition to the closing of Haddam Elementary School and RSD17’s “restructuring” (really it’s a consolidation) plan. Regardless of how you feel about the school closing and educational consolidation, we can all agree that there is a large following, comprised of people from both Haddam and Killingworth, who disagree with the district’s current plans. This group and its growing number of supporters have been trying in many ways to reach the members of the BOE and town leadership. There have been meetings, emails, articles, social media postings, news clips and a myriad of public comments – all to no avail. Legally, the Board of Education has every right to do whatever they think is best. However, many in town believe procedural justice has not been served on this issue, and that the perspectives and assessments of many residents have not been fully acknowledged.

So our upcoming vote is our voice - the only voice we have in the cacophonous narrative of misguided and uncompromising leadership.

A motion was brought up in a recent BOE meeting to include an extra line of text on the referendum. It was suggested by Brenda Buzzi that the NO section could read “NO – I do not support for financial reasons” or “NO – I do not support RSD17’s consolidation plan.” This motion was denied.

Clearly, the BOE does not want to know how many people in these two towns will not support the work of the BOE and the Superintendent due to their consolidation plan, their decision to close of Haddam Elementary School and their imperious management practices.

To amend this, the Friends of HES will be present at all voting locations with an exit poll. We will be asking voters WHY they voted the way they voted on the budget. These results will be presented to the BOE. As responsible elected officials, they will need to acknowledge the polls and react to them in their decision to alter the budget to better fit the needs of their constituents. We are not voting NO necessarily because the budget is too high, but because this budget is not a good fit for our community.

So what does my NO vote mean? It means no, I do not support your proposed budget, and no I do not support your proposed consolidation of the RSD17 schools for the following reasons:

1. RSD17 is closing a school in the center of Higganum, which will endanger our business community
and will impose far more financial hardship on residents of Haddam and Killingworth than the relatively small amount of money it would cost each household to maintain HES continuously operating as a school.

2. The BOE’s proposed solution to the transportation line item is wasteful. Separate buses for HK Intermediate School (HKIS) and HKMS will travel to the same building, which translates to inefficiency and increased fuel costs. Late buses will not be available for HKIS students, which translates to increased fuel costs for families of students participating in before and after school activities.

3. The budget removes 10 teaching positions, but the salary and benefits of those positions have not been fully removed from the proposed budget.

4. The budget adds a “Lead Teacher of Student Life” position to help lead the total HKIS and HKMS school to the tune of $99,000 starting salary plus benefits. We are puzzled about why we need two principals and a Lead Teacher in one building to see that this new school structure can operate.

5. The budget does not provide and estimation or planning for future expenses. In the absence of a complete capital plan we have no evidence that any stated savings won’t be abolished by future costs (e.g. renovation/addition to remaining school building(s)). Much like the report generated by the Strategic Capital Planning committee, this budget document does not provide for planning beyond the 2019-2020 budget cycle.

6. Band and Select Chorus for HKIS students will be scheduled before school. With this change, we will be driving children up to about 20 minutes each direction during the morning commute.

7. The proposed budget copies and pastes items from one year to the next. This does not make good sense. Our district leaders should be contacting each vendor (copy machines, technology providers, service contracts, etc.) to negotiate better pricing. This is not happening, and such conferring could save us money if they took the time to do it.

8. According to state statute, school budgets cannot decrease from one year to the next. However, there are special circumstances (including closing a school), that allow the district to lower budgets to a level below the previous year’s budget. Why are we seeing a .9% increase in spending in a year that we are closing an entire school?

For the reasons stated above, we simply cannot back this budget. We need to fight for what is best for both our children and our towns. We are worried that closing Haddam Elementary will hurt Higganum’s economic vitality and spur a decrease in home values. We are not willing to send our sons and daughters into HKIS as 4th grade guinea pigs under an ill-conceived plan when the actual financial and educational costs far exceed any optimistic gains in either area. We would gladly invest more in RSD17 if we were assured those monies were being managed properly. Until we gain consensus on these important matters, we will continue to vote no.

Most Sincerely,
Kathryn and Samuel Packtor, Peter and Jane Baird, Gina Block, Liz Bazazi, Joseph and Kathryn Rizzo, Shawna and David Goldfarb, Sally Jordan, Neal Perron, Jennifer and Jim Petrillo, Pamela and Samuel Crum, Marie and Eric Lippincott, Amy Richmond, Rob Prchal, Nicole and Jeb Stevens, Sarah and Graig Judge, Michelle Burr Caron and John Caron, Taylor Sergi, Glenn and Marsha Brielmann, Valerie and Steven Wyzykowski, Cathy and Mike Mikulski, Jola and Kevin O’Conner, Mary Hickish
The closer you look at our warm, welcoming community, the easier it is to see why Safe Harbor at The Saybrook at Haddam is the right place for your loved one. **Safe Harbor offers:**

- Specialized assisted living for those with Alzheimer's or dementia
- Comfortable shared or private apartments in a welcoming neighborhood
- Programs run by highly-trained memory care professionals
- Support for family members

Discover all the ways we can beautifully care for someone you love. Contact us today at **860.345.3779** to schedule a private tour.

[www.TheSaybrookAtHaddam.com](http://www.TheSaybrookAtHaddam.com)

1556 Saybrook Rd. | Haddam, CT 06438
Haddam and Middlesex County in general has a lot of things going on to interest seniors, even if you’re on a fixed income. Let me suggest that you consider joining Haddam Club 60 and attend other activities in the area.

I have the advantage of being able to take advantage of stuff on both sides of the river. I’ve attended a talk on global warming by a Wesleyan professor (Portland), spent an evening with Edgar Allan Poe (Brainerd Library), a talk by one of the last Native American families in East Hampton, did a walk of houses in Middle Haddam, listened to the author of a history of the Valley Railroad (Middletown), attended a State Senate candidate debate (Colchester), listened to a nursery expert talk about ash tree bugs that may kill all these trees (Middle Haddam).

This, plus I have a bunch of hobbies and seven grandchildren in New Jersey, Maryland, and Texas, who keep me very busy. Finally, I also operate trolleys and subway cars at the two Connecticut museums.

Here’s another suggestion, my uncle belongs to what he calls a widower’s club. Once a week they go out to breakfast, and to help make it an adventure they try to find a new place to try.

My point is: get out there and do stuff because you’re dead a long time!

A great many seniors want to remain in their homes, but they have increasing issues with strength, flexibility, muscle coordination and physical function. It has been shown that physical and mental activity is key to forestalling the onset of these debilitating conditions. It is my hope that this short article will motivate some of you to get outside and socialize versus just sitting in front of the TV thinking about what ails you today.

I also want to remind you that Haddam has a senior center open Monday through Friday that provides lunch for a small fee and various activities, including a weekly shopping trip to the Middletown Walmart in their van. But they could do more. That’s where we need your input.

- Tell us what services you want.
- Reach out to those that won’t come out of their houses and get them to join in.

This is not to say that the First Selectman or the departments that work for her have been short changing our seniors. To the contrary, as cochair of the committee on aging I have come to know that she genuinely cares about us.

Now if I haven’t motivated you yet, here is the future for those seniors who let themselves become sedentary as reported by John Hopkins University.

The following are some of the statistics of a survey of 7,000 seniors who still live in their own homes as reported by Judith Kasper and Amber Willink, both of John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

They applied their survey to the estimated 39 million seniors in the United States:

- 13% had substantial need for assistance with daily activities.
- 13% had few needs for assistance with daily activities.
- 13% were quite self-sufficient.

When they looked at it from another prospective, they found out that:

Continued on pg. 6
LETTERS—Cont’d

- 60% used at least one device to help them with movement, bathing, or toileting.
- 42% had probable dementia or had some difficulty preforming daily activities.
- 25% said they remained in bed, had issues with getting dressed, and required assistance with toileting issues.
- 13% had some kind of personal assistant to help with movement, food, or housekeeping.

Still don’t have your attention yet? If you’re still not motivated to get out of bed, the marketplace does have living options (nursing homes, assisted-living centers and home aid services) and products to help these challenged seniors, such as, specially designed clothing, eating utensils, raised toilet seats, in-shower chairs, disposable pads or undergarments. But all this cost money, lots of money. So, wouldn’t it be better to eat better, exercise and stimulate the brain with books and events outside the house?

My final point deals with our need to be a bit frugal in what we ask the town to do for us. Let me identify three factors that contribute to why Haddam’s financial resources are getting increasingly restricted:

- A high percentage of town is off the tax rolls due to state/local parks and trails.
- A lot of us in Haddam are seniors. Of those 55 and older, it is 30% of the population. 65 and older is 13% here versus 11% in Moodus, 9.8% in East Hampton, and 9% in Middletown.
- The younger generations left and many went out of state.

Let me expand on the last point. Current seniors had good paying jobs in their working years at Pratt & Whitney, Electric Boat, insurance industry, etc., but their children have found less of these jobs in our state and the politicians in Hartford have been raising the taxes again and again and again so these kids have had no choice but look for jobs out of this area. My son is a good example. He lived in Haddam Neck and worked in Cromwell, now he is in Texas.

R. Thurston Clark, Vice-Chair
Haddam Committee on Aging

SCHOOL BUDGET REFERENDUM

May 7 – 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Shall we adopt Regional School District #17 Education gross budget of $42,565,814.85 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019?

Polling Locations

District 1: Haddam Firehouse Community Hall, 439 Saybrook Road
District 2: Central Office, 57 Little City Road

District 3: Haddam Neck Firehouse

Curb side voting available for voters with a disability.

To register to vote: your application must be received by mail or in-person by the registrar or town clerk by 4 p.m. on May 6.

Call the registrar at 860-345-0979 or the town clerk at 860-345-8531 for absentee ballot applications or more information.
Understanding the Town Budget

As noted, the town budget is the combination of two separate budgets: one to operate RSD17 schools, prepared by the board of education, and the other for local government expenses, prepared by the board of finance.

Residents vote on each budget separately. The school budget will be voted on at a public referendum Tuesday, May 7. Then on Thursday, May 23, the annual town meeting will be held at which time voters get to approve the government component of the town budget. Immediately following approval of the town budget, Haddam’s BOF meets to review the necessary tax rate (mill rate) required to fund all approved public expenditures. The approved town budget and tax rate take effect on July 1 and continue until June 30 the following year.

Let’s review the proposed FY2020 school and government budgets. We will start with the board of education’s proposed budget since school spending represents almost 75% of all town spending.

The Board of Education School Budget

On April 2, RSD17 BOE completed its review of school Superintendent Howard Thiery’s FY2020 preliminary budget, trimming $299,245 from his gross spending request and adding $38,245 to district revenues.

The BOE’s proposed net budget next year totals $41,942,643, representing an increase of $1,312,149 next year, an increase of 3.2%.

This year will go down in history as one of the most difficult in memory for members of the BOE and local residents. A 20% decline in enrollment (-519 students) over the past decade has left the school district with an alarming amount of excess capacity, especially at the elementary school level. Currently there are 697 students (PK-4) enrolled in the district’s three elementary schools—facilities originally designed to accommodate over 1,250 students.

Over the past few years there have been discussions about downsizing the district from five schools to four, but when the decision was finally made to restructure grade ranges and to close HES, it triggered a firestorm of protest in the community.

The debate about closing HES has been vigorous and emotional. Many residents argue that it is the wrong school to close, and that its closing will have grave consequences on the vibrancy of Higganum Village. Others argue that the decline in enrollment will soon reverse itself and that we will need more, rather than less, classroom capacity in the near future.

Without a crystal ball no one can really project future enrollment, but if one wants to venture a guess they can take a look at Exhibit 3 showing official State of Connecticut demographic projections for the years 2020 and 2030 compared to actual 2010 federal census data for the key 25-54 age bracket (target ages for parents of PK-12 students).

Between 2010 to 2020 the number of 25-54-year-olds in Haddam and Killingworth is projected to decline 12%. During the same timeframe RSD17 enrollment will have lost lost over 500 students. Almost two-thirds of the 25-54 population decline will occur in Killingworth, whose enrollment has gone down by 321 students in the past decade. Between 2020 and 2030 demographers project a further 8% decline in these key age brackets.

Unless present trends change dramatically—more young people move into the region, more people marry earlier, or families have more children—it appears that demographics (as imperfect a science as it is) does not support the notion that RSD17 enrollment will

Continued on pg. 8

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7
be expanding anytime soon. Should enrollment suddenly spike upwards, the district, even after restructuring, has the capacity to accommodate another 700+ students in the immediate future without having to build new school facilities.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE FY2020 SCHOOL BUDGET

Spending

The BOE’s proposed gross budget, which includes spending for school operations and contributions to its capital fund, will increase by $379,666 next year. That figure includes saving $1,179,837 as a result of the district restructuring program and closing HES. A major portion of that savings is from a net reduction of 13 district employees. Exhibit 4 breaks down next year’s proposed spending, presenting it ranked in order of the biggest dollar increases over the current year.

Expenses are being driven up next year mainly in three areas: benefits, tuition, and learning programs.

Employee benefits are the district’s second largest expense, with health care being the major component of this budget item. Total benefits will increase $413,628 (5.4%) next year. The key cost driver here is the district’s decision to join the State of Connecticut Partnership Plan for health insurance next year. Currently the district self-insures but the Partnership Plan promises to provide long-term pricing advantages.

Much of the increase in tuition costs relates to special education, a budget area that has many state and federally mandated program requirements. Nesti said the $133,959 increase is calculated based on known student needs...
at this time. Nesti also commented that cost increases in learning programs are designed to provide a more focused and higher quality educational experience for students.

Two areas of cost reductions are in building and grounds, and transportation. Over one-half of the savings in building and grounds is a result of $140,000 lower utility costs at HKHS. These savings are directly attributable to recent investments in energy efficiency (new boilers, solar panels, LED lighting, etc.) at the high school. It is expected that these savings will increase once the new systems become fully operational and whenever heating oil and kilowatt costs go up in the future.

The savings in transportation results from a $169,000 decrease in outsourced services and internship program transport costs. These savings were offset by $75,000 in higher costs of out-of-district special education and district services expense.

Revenue

RSD17 receives income from several sources other than the taxpayers of Haddam and Killingworth. Next year the BOE projects that revenue will increase by $247,354 (+36%) to $940,861. Higher revenues resulted from an almost $200,000 increase in ECG (Excess Cost Grants) funding. ECG grants are awarded by the state when the cost of educating a special education student exceeds 4.5 times a district’s net current expenditure per pupil.

The other major revenue contributor came from a new source—ZREC (Zero Emissions Renewable Energy Credits). The ZREC Program pays Eversource electricity consumers who invest in renewable energy systems. RSD17 will be receiving an estimated $38,610 in ZREC revenue next year based on the projected number of kilowatt-hours of energy generated by HKHS’s newly installed solar power system.

Prior Year Surplus

In addition to higher revenue another spending offset comes from giving back to taxpayers the amount of the prior-year budget surplus (money budgeted but unspent in the previous fiscal year). Next year the amount of prior-year’s giveback totals $643,858—a significant increase of $439,967 over this year’s budget.

Budget Assessment

After deducting the prior year’s giveback from the net budget, you can compute the real out-of-pocket taxpayer cost of running RSD17, called the budget assessment. Haddam and Killingworth split the tab of running RSD17 based on a formula that computes the percentage share of total enrollment coming from each town.

Haddam’s percentage share of total enrollment will go down slightly from 59.41% this year to 58.95% next year. Exhibit 5 shows the huge impact this small percentage decline will have for Haddam taxpayers next year. Bottom line, Haddam taxpayers’ bill for running RSD17 will be $378,065 (-1.5%) LESS next year.

After reviewing the budget we asked Nesti if she thought the district restructuring program and/or proposed FY2020 budget in any way compromised RSD17’s reputation for educational excellence.

Nesti’s reply was clear, “No. In fact, there is no more important guideline for anyone involved in the creation of the school budget than educational excellence and—as much as possible—innovation.

Continued on pg. 11
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Haddam Bulletin • May 2019
We have been mindful from the start that by directing our resources toward four campuses instead of five, we might be able to enhance innovation and allow our great team of educators to think big about the best ways of teaching all of our students.

The creation of the intermediate school offers an outstanding example of innovation and increasing excellence. District-wide, we continue to look for ways to improve, while being mindful of the social, emotional and academic development of our students and the well-being of residents in Haddam and Killingworth.

The Board of Finance Government Budget

The government spending portion of the town budget covers a gamut of public services ranging from running town hall to maintaining streets; from providing police and fire protection to supervising local elections; from developing long-range capital budgets to clipping the grass at local playing fields. The town government is managed by the board of selectmen under the financial oversight of the board of finance.

As of press time, local government spending for FY2020 totals $8,271,371—an increase of $834,050 (+11.2%) over the current year (Exhibit 6).

BOF Chair Joe Centofanti always cautions residents that its proposed spending budget is subject to change until after its May 8 public hearing, after which the BOF will finalize its budget request. Once finalized, voters will be asked to approve that budget at the annual town meeting on May 23.

Copies of the proposed BOF budget will be available on the town’s website (Haddam.org) and at town hall.

As readers are aware, the town has managed to provide government services and pay our share of running the school system for the past three years without a tax hike. Keeping the mil rate at 31.69 has been accomplished through a combination of cost-controls, creative accounting, $6,480,000 in debt financing, and a huge increase in personal property taxes being paid by Eversource on improvements made at the Haddam substations over the past several years.

Whether taxes can remain at 31.69 mils depends on many factors that are currently unknown, such as the level of state funding in FY2020. However, next year’s 11.2% increase in BOF spending will not help keep taxes steady. Let’s look at those areas of government spending contributing to the 11.2% increase.

Exhibit 7 identifies the major changes (up and down) in local government spending. The three budget areas driving up expenses next year are debt service, capital, and a new incentive program at the town’s two volunteer fire departments. Let’s review these three items that will add almost $840,000 more in spending next year.

Debt Service: An Increase of $557,800 (+79%)

Debt service is the annual amount of principal and interest that is paid back to lenders on long-term borrowed debt. Increased capital spending usually drives the need to borrow money. When First Selectwoman Lizz Milardo was elected, the town owed $2,380,000 in long-term debt (borrowed to finance construction of the transfer station in 2012). The town borrowed another $6,480,000 in 2017 to finance road improvements. Debt service on those two bonds is budgeted at $688,115 for FY2020.

Discussions have been held this year about obtaining voter approval to borrow even more money for capital projects. An ambitious 10-year capital plan was prepared with over $50,000,000 in proposed projects. Even after subtracting grants and $27.4 million in large items ($6.5 million for sewers in Higganum, $5.9 million for new town garage, and $15 million for roadwork) the multi-year plan would cost taxpayers about $18,000,000 (plus interest on the debt) over the next 20 years.

The BOF is proposing borrowing $7,000,000 next year that would cover the first few years worth of these projects. In FY2020, debt service on this new bond is estimated at $557,800. Total debt service on the three bonds will be $1,263,115 in FY2020. If approved by voters, the town will owe about $15 million in long-term debt (six times the amount owed in 2016).

Capital: An Increase of $195,000 (+50%)

Capital spending was discussed above and represents non-recurring expenditures where the benefit of the money spent continues over a long period, rather than being exhausted in a short

Continued on pg. 12
period. These include items like trucks, buildings, etc.

Proposed capital spending in FY2020 totals $585,000. New capital funds will be used to facilitate next year’s revaluation and to help fund the purchase of new trucks.

**Fire Department Incentive: An Increase of $87,000 (New Budget Item)**

All over America local volunteer fire departments are finding it hard to recruit new members. Right now Haddam already has a fire department incentive plan that provides Haddam and Haddam Neck volunteers a small pension (up to $500 a year) based on years of service. The $87,000 incentive plan is a new program based on what other towns have been doing to attract and retain volunteers. According to Milardo, the plan pays volunteers based on the number of calls they participate in during the year. Milardo said the details of the plan were still being developed with the fire chiefs but that the plan will likely have an annual incentive cap of $1,000 per member.

**Where Does the Money Come From to Pay the Bills?**

Town budget expenses are paid from various revenue sources including property tax revenue, intergovernmental funding (state grants and subsidies), charges for services like transfer station stickers, real estate conveyance fees, building permits, interest income on town fund balances, and sometimes ‘dipping into the till’ by withdrawing money from various town fund balances and adding those dollars to the revenue column of the budget.

The town caught a huge break recently when Eversource single-handedly added over $34,000,000 to the town’s tax base, helping the grand list skyrocket 4.4%. Eversource contributed over $1,000,000 in new tax revenue. While those dollars are still coming in, we are confronted next year with anemic growth in this year’s grand list—up just 0.14%. That small increase in the tax base adds only $40,000 more in property tax revenue at the current 31.69 mil rate.

That doesn’t portend well for the future. Next year’s board of finance proposed hike of $834,050 in government spending will more than offset the cut of $378,065 in our RSD17 assessment, potentially leaving Haddam residents stuck having to pony up more in property taxes.

How much more is the big question? As of press time the board of finance has not released revenue projections so there is no way to inform readers whether an increase in the property tax rate is imminent.

**Town Spending is Decided by the Taxpayers – The Final Countdown**

There are several steps still left before voters approve the final town budget.

**Step 1:** On **Tuesday, May 7**, the BOE’s recommended school budget will be voted on at a public referendum by residents in Haddam and Killingworth. Once approved by voters, the level of school spending cannot be lowered at the annual town meeting held later in the month. If the budget is rejected at the referendum, the BOE will prepare a new budget and a date will be set for another referendum on this revised budget.

**Step 2:** On **Wednesday, May 8**, at 6:30 p.m., the Board of Finance will hold a hearing at the Firehouse, 439 Saybrook Road in Higganum, where the public is invited to comment and make suggested changes to the proposed government spending plan. Based on public input, the BOF’s budget will then be finalized. Copies of the proposed budget will be available prior to the meeting at the town’s website (Haddam.org) or at Town Hall. Copies of the final proposal will be also be available after the meeting at the same places.

**Step 3:** On **Thursday, May 23**, at 6:30 p.m., the proposed town budget will be voted on by residents at the annual town meeting at the firehouse. Only the BOF’s government spending portion can be reduced.

If voters accept the town budget, the BOF meets immediately following the meeting to determine how to pay for approved spending and set next year’s tax rate.

If residents reject the proposed budget, the budget process will begin again with a future date set for voting on a revised town budget.

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**EXHIBIT 7**

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<tr>
<th>Biggest Spending Increases</th>
<th>Biggest Changes in Next Year’s Government Budget</th>
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<tr>
<td>Debt Service</td>
<td>557,800</td>
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<td>Capital Budget</td>
<td>195,000</td>
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<td>Fire Dept. (FD) Incentive</td>
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<td>Road Salt</td>
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<td>FD equip/maint/supplies</td>
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<td>Biggest Spending Decreases</td>
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<td>(73,900) Sand</td>
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<td>(56,000) Contingency</td>
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<td>(20,000) HK Recreation</td>
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<td>(19,000) Town Counsel/Legal</td>
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<td>(15,284) Muni Agent/HPH</td>
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Planning and Zoning Commission Recommends Haddam Purchase HES

As required by state statutes, anytime the town seeks to acquire or transfer real estate, the board of selectmen (BOS) must ask the planning and zoning commission (P&Z) to weigh in on the decision and submit a report with their recommendations.

P&Z looks at different factors, but mainly assesses if the contemplated purchase would support the town’s plan of conservation and development.

As a result, at their April 18 meeting, the planning and zoning commission voted unanimously to recommend to the BOS that the town should acquire the HES property.

A few key points from the report:

- Town ownership (rather than RSD17) would give a better level of scrutiny to the proposed sale or lease, allow the best interest for economic vitality of Higganum Center, and would help maintain consistency with the plan of conservation and development.

- In addition, the report noted that the property does not need a public sewer to accommodate future uses. In fact, the existing septic system and the soils on the property allow for fairly intensive re-use.

The letter below from P&Z chair, Jamin Laurenza, gives more details.

Haddam Board of Selectmen
Haddam Town Hall,
Field Park Dr., Haddam, CT

RE: CGS8-24 Report—Proposed Acquisition of Haddam Elementary School

Dear Selectmen:

Chapter 126 Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes indicates no legislative body shall acquire land for any airport, park, playground, school or other municipally owned property or public building until the proposal to take such action has been referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission (the Commission) for a report.

The purpose of the report is to determine consistency with the statutorily mandated, municipal Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

The proposed acquisition of Haddam Elementary School (HES) by the Town from Regional School District 17 (RSD 17) was referred to the Commission for a report and discussed at its meeting on April 18, 2019.

The POCD is very much focused on preserving and enhancing Higganum Village. This will be accomplished by attracting uses that generate activity not only during the traditional hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM but also in the evening and on the weekends.

Some of the characteristics that will make Higganum Center unique and attractive to baby boomers, millennials and young families are its walk-ability, mixed use character, Swan Hill, the Cove and a vibrant new use at HES.

Two of the goals for Higganum Village in the POCD are:

“Make Higganum a place where residents and visitors alike gather and meet.”

“Enhance the visual appearance and economic vitality of Higganum.”

Continued on pg. 14
To accomplish these goals there is nothing more important than activity. This activity comes from people living, working, playing, worshiping, shopping, dining and learning in the village.

The HES property is currently zoned single family residential. Other uses allowed by special exception include - churches, private schools, elderly housing, convalescent and nursing homes, day cares, veterinarians, art galleries, studios and classrooms. The CT Supreme Court has concluded if a special exception application meets all of the criteria in the zoning regulations the Commission must approve the application. The Commission has very limited discretion over the future use of this property if it complies with current zoning.

The property does not need a public sewer to accommodate future uses. The existing septic system and the soils on the property allow for fairly-intensive re-use. The Commission feels the town should investigate how the soils on the property can support other properties in the village.

Market rate multi-family housing is not currently allowed in the zone despite the fact that the Town’s own market study identifies a market demand for such a use and the POCD recommends housing for the village center because of the activity housing creates in the evenings and on the weekends.

The questions the Commission considers relevant include:

• What is the best future use of the property?

• Would any of the above-mentioned permitted uses add to the vitality of Higganum Center and a significant addition to the grand list?

• Would a tax-exempt use like a place of religious worship or a very specialized private school add to the vibrancy of the village center?

• Which ownership entity, the Town or RSD 17, would give a proposed sale or lease the level of scrutiny it deserves?

• Which ownership entity, the Town or RSD 17, would have the greatest interest and concern for the economic vitality of Higganum Center?

• Which ownership entity, the Town or RSD 17, will focus its deliberations on consistency with and implementation of the POCD?

After reviewing all of these considerations with its professional staff and the attached flow charts the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Selectman that the Town of Haddam acquire Haddam Elementary School from RSD 17.

Thank you for referring this matter to the Commission for a report. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Town Planner to discuss further.

Sincerely;

Jamin Laurenza
Chairman
Planning and Zoning Commission
Town Survey Results 2019 by Ed Schwing

In what has become a yearly tradition, the Bulletin published a questionnaire in March asking for our readers’ opinion on a range of current town issues. This year’s subjects included Higganum Center, the future of Haddam Elementary (HES), Tylerville, public access to Chatham Lake, the transfer station, town services and town roads, etc. Our questions were chosen to reflect some specific issues that our town leadership is dealing with right now and we hope your answers will guide them when making final decisions.

We want to thank the nearly 200 residents and families who took the time to participate in our survey. The forms came from a wide geographical cross section of our town: from the Durham and Killingworth borders, through the many hills of Higganum and Haddam, and by way of Tylerville and Haddam Neck.

Many of you took the time to share ideas and opinions beyond the yes or no answers and we are happy to share some of those with our readers. We could not do justice to all the good comments you provided for lack of space but we plan to sort those out further and submit them to the relevant boards and commissions in town.

HIGGANUM VILLAGE & HES

Higganum Sewers

A small infrastructure committee has been pursuing the idea that Higganum Center needs public sewers to help the center grow. We asked if taxpayers should subsidize such a system and over three quarters of the responses were negative. Asked how much they would be willing to contribute if they had to, 76% responded with a “zero” while only half of the 24% who supported the sewers were willing to contribute through their taxes.

Should taxpayers pay for sewers?

- Yes: 76%
- No: 24%

Apartments and Tax Abatement

On the need for apartments in the center, responses were pretty much evenly split. For those who wanted apartments, comments varied from “for seniors only” to “luxury apartments to give urban people a rural environment.” For those opposing it, comments ranged from “extra burden on fire and ambulance department” to “added costs of public sewers” to “we don’t want the riffraff coming in.”

As for giving developers a tax abatement to build apartments, the majority response was stronger: almost 80% are against giving a tax abatement for that purpose.

Should the town give tax abatements to a developer?

- Yes: 21%
- No: 79%

Haddam Elementary School

With the pending referendum set for June 4 to acquire the property, it seems timely to look at the results of that subject.

The first question asked was if you considered HES an integral part of the Center. Almost three quarters (74%) of the respondents agreed.

On the other hand, 26% did not see the school as being integral to the community. “It has never been available for community use,” one reader commented.

If HES Closes

The next question dealt with the closure of HES and what should become of the structure.

Since the two questions following this one will deal with potential public uses, we only list here proposals if the building became available to the private sector.

Quoted most often was “senior housing or assisted living apartments,” and “sell it to a developer.” Other suggestions listed were stores, bowling, theater, weapons research, Taco Bell, Subway, restaurant, private or magnet school, medical offices, alternative medicine, industrial park.

It’s worth noting that some responses suggested keeping the building as a school even if it meant mothballing it for future use if it closed. One person commented: “Ask the Board of Education [what to do with the building] they know everything!”

Are you in favor of the town taking over?

When asked if they were in favor of the town taking the building over for public use, a strong majority (71%) emerged in supporting of the idea.

In addition, 73% agreed that the town could use the facility. Ideas included senior center, community space, combined with some other uses like youth center, town gym, nature science center, internet hub, child care, emergency shelter when power is lost, police

Continued on pg. 16
station, expanding veteran and town museums, cultural arts center, meeting rooms, agricultural or vocational schools, etc.

Some proposed consolidating the town offices and selling the other buildings.

“Move the current town hall to the HES building where it can be seen” wrote one reader. “Consolidate town hall, senior center, annex building and others, sell those off,” wrote another.

**Merging Districts**

Given the recent discussion at the state legislature regarding expanding the school system’s regionalization, we asked if RSD17 and RSD4 (Chester, Deep River, Essex) or East Haddam should merge into a super school district to better utilize facilities, educational resources, and share administrative expenses. The overall response was negative (58%) but there was some support as 42% who favored merging the two systems.

“Don’t we have enough problems?” one respondent wrote.

Interestingly, when we asked a similar question in last year’s survey we received a response in about the same proportion, with 62% no and 38% yes.

**TYLERVILLE**

Following the demolition of a historical building to make way for the Dollar General store, plus the controversial rezoning of the area, we wanted to gauge if there was a consensus among readers about the town taking more control on the type of business moving to Tylerville.

Our survey results show an almost even split in opinions: 49% favor letting any business move in, while 51% would prefer a more selective approach.

From those who said yes, some of the suggestions: small industrial park, McDonalds, KFC, any fast food restaurant, small manufacturing, Taco Bell, laundromat, anything legitimate but no sex shops or strip clubs, Home Depot, Costco, should be totally commercial, anything to bring down the mill rate, anything that draws people and creates jobs.

For those who wanted more control: small family-owned shops, upscale restaurant, bakery, anything consistent with Haddam’s colonial flavor, shops like East Haddam and Chester, small hardware store, uses that make the town attractive.

There were some marginal comments. “Let nearby residents decide,” was one, while someone else commented, “Too late, it’s a Berlin Turnpike already.”

As for sidewalks, while there was an even split for constructing a crosswalk on the swing bridge, more people agreed it was a bad investment to build them in Tylerville (64% to 36%).

**CHATHAM LAKE**

We asked two questions relative to this subject, one asking if the town should develop the lake for recreational use by residents and the second included repairing the dam and handing over the lake to a future owners’ association without compensation.

The answers were overwhelmingly in favor of retaining the lake for Haddam resident use (95% in favor.) As for repairing the dam and giving the lake to the home owners association without compensation, a whopping 97% responded negatively. “Hell no!” one respondent wrote in the margins.

For some, the questions seemed to be stating the obvious: “use your brain” one resident wrote next to his responses. However, the questions were very relevant and timely. Indeed, two actions being worked on right now by First Selectman Milardo, with the help of the town attorney, are fixing up the dam with taxpayers’ money, and giving the lake and surrounding open space free of charge to a future Silversprings homeowners’ association.

**TRANSFER STATION**

Overall the transfer station received good ratings from residents, with some suggestions and a sprinkle of complaints.

90% of the respondents agreed that the transfer station was well managed, with some positive comments: “We
have one of the best ones around.” The transfer station staff got kudos as well: “The staff is wonderful,” “Great friendly staff,” “Staff is very good.” But as one person noted “There is always room for improvement.” Some suggestions were made as well, most about traffic flow and hours:

“Need better car flow.” “Poor layout.” “Less loitering and talking, dump and go!” “Poor design especially backing out of the space.” “Keep dogs on leashes.” “Little children should not be allowed, an accident waiting to happen.” “Transfer station should open more days during the week.” “Later hours for working people would be great.”

While 18% thought the price of a transfer pass was too high, 82% considered it fair. Comments focused on sharing a pass within a household and checking for those who do not have one.

“Should be one sticker per household, not per car.” “Should be able to purchase second sticker for half price.” “Should assign someone to check stickers.” “Too many out-of-towners use our transfer station.”

**Recycling**

Most of the respondents felt that the recycling signage and town encouragement to recycling was adequate, however more than a quarter were not satisfied.

“There should be more signage showing what can be recycled and what cannot.” “Should educate people on bulky waste: how much metal on an item before it goes to metal recycling instead.” “We should add a bin just for returnable bottles.” “Add plastic bag recycling beyond the transfer station, for example Higganum Center.”

As for increasing the swap shack size, the responses were pretty even, tilting slightly toward the negative, with 52% against the idea.

**Contractors**

A more clear-cut majority, 95% of the responses, thought that contractors dumping construction bulky waste should not pay the same amount for a transfer pass as the average household. In fact, 60% believed they should be required to get their own dumpster when performing construction work in town.

If they are not using their own dumpsters, many suggested contractors should certainly pay more for a sticker. Other suggestions were instituting a flat fee per load, volume, or weight.

**Town Roads**

Here the majority (63%) feel that town roads are still not in good shape even after the town bonded $6.4 million for road repairs. The follow-up question asked which roads needed improvement.

From the extreme “All our roads,” and “All of Haddam Neck,” the roads needing some form of repair and listed most often were:


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Sharing Services

The majority (63%) is in favor of collaborating with other towns, as long as there were cost benefits associated with it. Some of the skeptics within the 37% who disagreed were weary that the town would lose control and decisions could be made by a majority vote of the other towns and end up costing the town more.

ADDITIONAL TOWN RECREATIONAL FACILITIES OR ACTIVITIES

Here are some of the suggestions that were offered by residents. Food for thought for our Haddam Park & Recreation Commission:

River recreation, activate Higganum Cove, ice skating ring, swimming, small beach area at Chatham Lake, bike paths, trails next to rail, town parade, winter or food festival, Kids Day, splash pad, playscape, better facilities at Higganum Reservoir, teen center, sidewalks on 154 and 81 to make walking safer, dog park, cultural art center tied to downtown, theater like “the Kate” in Old Saybrook, disk golf, events that bring the community together, carnivals, antique fairs, multi-generational community center.

A few residents had a different point of view on the need for more recreation in town: “We have enough already.” “HK Recreation seems adequate.” “No more damn baseball fields!”

MORE YOUNG PEOPLE IN TOWN AND HOW TO ATTRACT THEM

A majority (71%) thought that Haddam needed to attract more young people to move in town. Some of the incentives proposed to make the
town more appealing to younger generations included lower taxes, more affordable housing, technology, good schools, jobs, bars, and restaurants.

One resident had this to say, “The town is already attractive. I am a millennial and I came here for the neighborhoods and the schools.”

A few comments from the 29% who did not share that view: “That age group is not interested in homeownership.” “We don’t need [millenials] more than other groups.” “We are closing a school, why do we need young people.”

**SCOVIL MILL PROPERTY**

Finally, a bit of a split on acquiring the Scovil Mill property with 56% in favor and 44% against the acquisition.

For those in favor, suggestions on what they would like to see it used for were plenty: town garage, shops, indoor market, mixed retail restaurant, artisan workshops, car wash, small industrial park, senior housing, parking garage for downtown, contractor parking bays, brew pub, apartments, regional agricultural center, indoor recreation center, and historical museum.

For those opposed to the acquisition, one main concern was the pollution existing on the site and the costs associated with the cleanup, as indicated in some of their comments: “Money pit, let’s take care of what we already have first.” “The state should be responsible to tear it down.” “Too expensive to rehabilitate.”
What is "Educational Excellence" at Regional School District 17?
by Gerry Matthews with Jonathan Todzia

As a top-rated school district in Connecticut, we have much to brag about scholastically. A major component of education is presenting material in a manner that “clicks” with the students. Our talented teachers excel at that. But there’s more to preparing our children to be successful in life than academic prowess. It also helps to be handy, self-reliant and resourceful. Another very important dimension HK offers could be termed “hands-on” learning. Sports, media, theater, music and art are familiar examples, but did you know there’s also woodworking and auto mechanics?

“Shop” has been phased out of many schools. It requires special equipment and can be dangerous. But it’s just those attributes which develop confidence and provide a unique sense of satisfaction that helps growing minds mature.

Jon Todzia is a tall red-head with a quick smile and alert demeanor. He’s taught Technology at HK for fourteen years. He currently teaches Level 1 and 2 Auto Shop, Level 1 and 2 Wood Shop, and a Civil Engineering and Architecture class. He is proud of his professional-grade woodworking and mechanics equipment and takes great pride in turning inexperienced teenagers into talented craftsmen and craftswomen.

Here’s what Jon has to say about his work:

I often have students who end up in my class because nothing else fits their schedule. I sometimes get the feeling that they don’t expect to enjoy the hands-on, male dominated shop setting, which at first glance can be very intimidating.

Almost always however, the satisfaction of the first cuts in wood shop, or the first twist a wrench in auto shop, they are hooked!

There is a feel in the wood shop that you don’t get in other parts of the building: the smell of pine, the break from the hustle, bustle, deadlines and stress, the work-at-your-own-pace and to your own ability, on your own design and attitude. These make the woodshop almost a refuge for some students at HK.

The joy, pride, and feeling of accomplishment that a teenager feels after learning to be competent on a large piece of woodworking equipment, like a planer or table saw, is hard to explain. The pride in bringing home a woodwork project is very different from a grade on a paper or test in another class. Something about it being tangible and being able to be held in your hand.

I recently had a young lady hand carve and wood-burn a sign on a piece of cherry that was the name of a camp in Maine that her family has owned for generations. She couldn’t wait to show her grandfather.
Another young man made a simple cutting board and gave it to his grandfather who was so impressed he didn’t believe the young man made it! As proof, the student and I made up a “Legal and Binding Contract” that we both signed and took a picture of while shaking hands, to show his grandfather!

I have three former students who turned their love of the wood shop into careers. I knew all three would be gifted in the trades and would be unmotivated in the normal academics of college life, so I encouraged them to try the carpentry field.

My first job out of college was with a very high-end builder on the Connecticut shoreline and I have stayed in contact with him throughout the years. I contacted him and all three students from different backgrounds and different years have been, and continue to be, hugely successful with his company.

Here is a short list of what I cover in each class:

- In the wood shop we cover safety, measurement and layout, hand tools, portable power tools, stationary power equipment, wood types, wood joinery, and tree identification. We also make maple syrup, fasteners, and glues.

- In the auto shop I cover safety, understanding the four-stroke engine, tires, the tire machine, the automotive lift, using a floor jack and jack stands, brakes, oil change, tune-up, plugs and wires, cooling systems, suspension, etc. We work on students’ and teachers’ vehicles and jobs from community members who ask.

Jon is a shining example of the diverse elements which go into making the “Education Excellence” of RSD17.

I am personally amazed that so many well educated adults have no idea how to make simple repairs on their homes or cars. And it seems that skilled craftsmen are becoming harder to find and afford. Knowing how to fix stuff is becoming a vital life skill. And being able to dream up and follow through on one’s own projects is immensely satisfying. The value of an RSD17 education can be a lifetime treasure.
A Word on Tolls

When I was growing up in Connecticut, we had tolls. They were a fact of life. But complicated federal transportation reimbursement fund policies began to shift, complicating the toll issue, and then, a serious accident on the Connecticut Turnpike (I-95) in Stratford in 1983 raised alarm bells about the safety of toll booths. So, tolls were abolished in 1985. Now, the Legislature and Governor are considering bringing them back. Three toll bills advanced out of the Transportation Committee in March, and much debate has ensued.

To my mind tolls are not a tax; they are a user fee. This is an important distinction: tolls are not an arbitrary money grab, as some naysayers are portraying them; rather, they are a common, and sensible way to keep Connecticut's roads in good order. We, as Connecticut residents, pay tolls in nearly every other New England state and New York every time we travel there. But both the residential and commercial vehicles of those states get a free ride on our roads, adding to the wear-and-tear while we pay to repair them. Why?

It’s also germane to point out that people don’t move to avoid tolls—we have not seen an influx of Massachusetts residents outraged by paying tolls in their state. And over a 10-year period, Connecticut transportation spending has been out-paced by Massachusetts’ spending by $6.3 billion. Still, tolls have become a lighting rod issue fanned by inflammatory and untrue anti-tax rhetoric.

I’ve heard from—and listened to—constituents and analysts on both sides of the argument, and have come to believe tolls are a necessary, if unfortunate, part of restoring fiscal equilibrium to our state. Across the country, many non-tolling states—including those led by Republican governors—are considering adding tolls in recognition that financial constraints demand more revenue.

The Republican plan (deceptively called “Prioritize Progress”) would increase borrowing by $700 million per year. Their borrowing proposal, plain and simple, will result in an income tax increase.

In addition, their credit-card style borrowing would cause our bond rating to plummet, making every transportation project more expensive to finance. Politicians of both major political parties frequently decry borrowing that “kicks the can down the road.” As the mother of four adult sons, I can tell you I do not want to enact any toll plan that falls on their generation’s shoulders to repay.

About Legislation

Now that May is here, we have finished voting bills out of the Judiciary Committee so they can move down the pipeline for consideration by the full House of Representatives. I continue to be amazed at the breadth of subjects we deal with, which can include some troubling aspects of human behavior and how the judicial system can best respond. Bill topics range from appropriate ways to deal with juveniles who steal cars, to the uses of solitary confinement, to the ethical implications of harvesting eggs or sperm from a deceased person. I

Update from State Rep.
Christine Palm

• Electronic toll gantries (not physical booths) on I-84, I-95, I-91, and the Merritt Parkway (no more than 50 in total).

• Tolls will be less than 5 cents per mile.

• Revenues from tolls will be exclusively used on transportation projects, which we desperately need in order to increase safety, and to attract new business to the state.

I understand people's mistrust of government, but it's time to stop the scare tactics. The Democratic plan we are considering today is realistic and doesn't place the burden solely on Connecticut taxpayers. Nor does it saddle future taxpayers with today's debt. And members of the Progressive Democratic Caucus are in conversation with Governor Lamont to try to ensure that the most income-constrained families are given a reduced rate. In any case, the funds raised are guaranteed to be used as they are intended—to bring our transportation infrastructure into the 21st Century, where it belongs.

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realize that not all of these bills directly affect the residents of our community. But some do. And one of the interesting parts of this job is considering, and voting on, proposals that have broader implications for the entire state and, if enacted, govern the lives of all Connecticut residents.

There are far too many bills to list here but I am proud to say that as a member of this important committee, I voted “yes” to advance the following bills (among many others).

S.B. 3: An Act Combating Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment
S.B. 63: An Act Concerning the Use of a Supported Decision-Making Agreement by a Person with a Disability
S.B. 440: An Act Protecting Employee Freedom of Speech and Conscience
H.B. 5524: An Act Increasing the Penalties for the Sale of Fentanyl
S.B. 1086: An Act Concerning Repeat Driving Under the Influence Offenders

In the Community

When I’m not in committee meetings voting on bills, I am in the community (and elsewhere at the Capitol) meeting with constituents. I continue to watch the evolving HES/Swan Hill issue with concern for Higganum’s future, and in the hope that all parties will work together for the good of the entire town.

Some of the groups I’ve met with and events I’ve attended over the last few weeks include: “Community Conversation” in Chester; Haddam Board of Selectmen and Board of Education; Chamber of Commerce, The Valley Stands Up; Chester Historical Society Auction; Essex Land Trust; Autism Awareness Day; Gun Safety Awareness Forum; and Women-Owned Business Forum.

And Finally:

If you have not already done so, please visit my official State website: www.housedems.ct.gov/palm and sign up for my electronic (emailed) newsletter.
Senior Scene

Haddam Senior Center
by Shannon Morrison Buganski

Senior Center Closings
May 16 (monthly field trip)
May 27 (Memorial Day)

Activity Highlights

New Fitness Program: Try our “Sit & Be Fit” DVD series, held on select Friday mornings at 10:30 am. Exercises improve core strength, flexibility, balance, coordination and circulation. No instructor, no pressure, no cost.

Thu, May 9: Mother's Day Tea Party
• noon • Sorry gentlemen, ladies only. Enjoy light luncheon, good conversation, and hot tea as we moms celebrate each other.

Wed, May 15: Painting Party “Cattails & Dragonflies” • 12:30 pm • An afternoon of artful inspiration, led by local artist Christine Miller. Register for this event and you have the opportunity to recreate your own version of one of Christine’s original paintings. $20/pp covers all materials and instruction.

Thu, May 16: FIELD TRIP: Wine Tasting at Gouveia Vineyards in Wallingford
• For $12, sample five pre-selected wines and one of your choice from the wine list. Includes a signature glass to keep. For meals, call the day before prior to noon. Call or leave message at 860-345-2480.

Fri, May 17: Haddam History Presentations at Burr Elementary School • 10:30 am • Jodi Stupakevich, 3rd grade teacher at Burr Elementary, invites us again to join their classes as they present their Haddam History Projects. Transportation may be available. Contact the Senior Center for more info.

Wed, May 22: Lunch & Learn “Fall Prevention” • noon • Presented by Jeff Piscitelli of Care One Security. Informative presentation includes fun raffle prizes and useful giveaways.

Thu, May 23: LAST CALL: Handchime Workshop • 10:30 am • Make noise with Steve Mazeau and the Haddam/East Haddam Home School Group. A brief handchimes demonstration with ringing techniques is followed by a play along. No musical experience required.


Don’t forget our regularly scheduled programming (musical groups, fitness programs, card games, BINGO, etc.). Check our monthly activity calendar and quarterly newsletter, The Senior Scoop. Get a copy at the Senior Center or go to www.haddam.org (Departments | Seniors).

Meals on Wheels
Homebound seniors can receive healthy meals delivered to the door. To learn more or you believe you may be eligible, contact the Senior Center or the Social Services office.

CRT Monthly Raffle
If you haven’t joined us for lunch in a while, come back. Raffle prize is a food item that goes along with the monthly themed meal. Each day you come to lunch, your name is entered into a “hat”. Drawing held the last lunch service of the month (birthday celebration).

Senior Van Service
Have difficulty driving or limited transportation? The Senior Van is available to residents 60+ for weekly shopping trips and monthly field trips. The service also provides door-to-door transportation to medical appointments.

NOTE: To schedule a ride, Jessica Condil at the Social Services Office (860-345-4621). Last minute cancellations, 860-682-3301. Make Field Trip reservations through the Senior Center.

Haddam CLUB 60
See Club President Mary Lou Pierce (860-345-2553) or contact the Senior Center for more info. Meetings generally held the 1st and 3rd Mondays monthly (Sept through June) at 1 pm.

May 6 • Business meeting
May 20 • Jeannine Lewis, Judge of Probate and Ice Cream Social

Committee on Aging (COA)
Upcoming meetings, both at 10 am:
May 20 • Haddam Neck Fairgrounds
Jun 10 • Annex Building
**From the Vault**

by Elizabeth Malloy, Executive Director
Haddam Historical Society

**We Want A Depot Here**

This painting of the Higganum Railroad Station was done by Higganum artist, Hans O. Hofmann, in 1936.

Hofmann was a well-known artist that lived on Little City Road in the early to mid-20th century. Born in Germany, he studied at the Weimar Art Academy before moving to New York City in 1914. He painted a number of early New Yorker magazine covers and had exhibitions at the Whitney Museum and Art Institute of Chicago.

While always maintaining a New York City studio, he came to Higganum in 1933 and renovated a farmhouse with his own hands where he painted until his death in 1973.

Hofmann was described as an artist of “varied modes and moods, reflecting atmospheres of varied times in varied forms. His work was somber or witty.”

About 50 years ago, the Haddam Historical Society hosted an exhibit of Hofmann’s watercolor paintings of local scenes and landmarks he created between 1935 to 1940. The display titled “Haddam Remembered” featured paintings of Michaelson’s Garage in Higganum, Higganum Ice Company, Olson’s General Store, and 15 other Haddam and Higganum sites. The Historical Society owns one of the paintings, the Higganum Railroad Station, while others are now in private collections.

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**Tax-Aide Volunteers Needed Now!**

We are so close to becoming a satellite site for the AARP Foundation Tax Aide Program. Due to lack of volunteers, we weren’t quite able to get the program running this year, though we do hope to make it available in 2020. If you think you might be interested, please don’t wait. AARP trains all program volunteers. No previous experience required.

We always have a need for volunteers. Whether you have a gift you’d like to share or even a little time to spare, we welcome it all! Stop by the Senior Center to complete a Volunteer Information Form which will help us identify your interests and availability. Thank you for your consideration!

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**Haddam Senior Picnic**

Monday, June 17 • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. • Haddam Neck Fairgrounds Pavilion

Get yourself over to the Haddam Senior Picnic for some fun and get your mojo working! I’d be willing to bet that fun didn’t disappear with your hair. So, be there or be square.

**What’s in it for me?**

Renewing old friendships and making new friends for starters. Fellowship and fun! What could be better?

There will be music (dance if you want) and a great traditional picnic lunch with ice cream for dessert.

And, it’s FREE. The picnic is sponsored by Haddam’s Committee on Aging and is paid for by the Town. A $5 deposit, to hold your seat, is required. Your deposit is returned when you attend the picnic.

**How do I make reservations?**

Susan Rutty is chair of the picnic committee and can be reached for more information and to make reservations. Call her at 860-345-4049. Reservation deadline: June 10.

**Drive? Forget it. Now what?**

Transportation will be provided for those who would like a ride—on a bus leaving from, and later returning to, Higganum Green. (We’ll also try to make sure that those who need it will get transport from home to the bus pick-up site. Tell Susan what your needs are when you make your reservation.)

Mark your calendars to save the date and make your reservation today!

**Monday, June 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
HALFINGER FARMS
GREENHOUSES
Higganum, Connecticut

BUY DIRECT FROM THE FARMER
TOP SELECTION & LOW PRICES

perennials, annuals,
hangers, plants, herbs,
veggie transplants...

A MUST VISIT
GREENHOUSE FARM

HALFINGER FARMS
489 CANDLEWOOD HILL RD.
HIGGANUM, CT

860-345-4609

M-F 9-6 • SAT-SUN 8-5
In February, the Haddam-Killingworth Boys Middle School Varsity basketball team concluded its season with a 74-56 victory over a competitive John Winthrop Middle School team to finish the season 16-0 and capture the Shoreline Middle School Conference Championship. It was the program’s fourth undefeated season since 2010.

The team averaged 65 points per game and allowed only 37 per contest, winning its 16 games by an average margin of 28 points per game. The team won every game by double figures; aside from a thrilling, 5-point overtime victory over a fantastic and well-coached Old Saybrook team late in the season.

The HKMS Varsity team was led by 8th grade stars Justin Menard, Bryce Anderson and Mason Gorham. The trio combined to average over 40 points per game, and each player scored over 20 points on multiple occasions this season. The “Big 3” were aided by the stellar play of fellow starters Tate Callender and Callen Powers; along with the sharp-shooting prowess of conference 6th man-of-the-year, Ethan Bessoni. One of the strengths of the team was its incredible depth, receiving year-long contributions from teammates Joe Giaccone, Patrick Mitchell, Ben DeCrosta and Tyler Perry.

These 8th graders were not only tremendous basketball players, but also model citizens who represented their school and community with class on and off the court. The team would like to thank the HKMS faculty and staff, their fellow classmates and most importantly their parents and siblings for their unwavering support throughout this season.
FUNDRAISERS

Dino’s Pizza Fundraiser
Tue, May 7 • 5-8 pm. Buffet-style, $12 for students, $20 for adults. Take-outs are also available. Cash, checks & credit cards accepted. Dino will donate a generous percentage of the proceeds to Project Graduation!

Beef Tenderloin Kabobs, Chicken Parmesan, Sausage & Peppers, Chicken Piccata, Penne Pasta (with or without Marinara sauce), Pizza, Tossed Salad, Beverages – coffee, tea, soft drinks. For info, contact Joe/Leslie at 860-663-1023, joecelano@gmail.com.

Sneakers Fundraiser for Project Grad.
Drop off your used sneakers at the following locations: Outside Brainerd Library and the feed store. Inside Higganum Physical Therapy, Middle school gym, HCC and FCCH churches, Killingworth Congregational Church, KES and Killingworth True Value.

The Middlesex County Annual 4-H Advisory 4-H Auction
Sat, May 11 • Preview at 4 pm, auction starts 6 pm • UConn Cooperative Extension Center, 1066 Saybrook Rd, Haddam. Auction includes new and vintage items, gift baskets, gift certificates, plants and more. Food concession featuring our famous 4-H chili and UConn Dairy ice cream. All proceeds benefit the 4-H youth of Middlesex Cnty. www.4-HAuction.org.

10th Annual Pulled Pork Dinner Presented by St. James Relay for Life Team
Sat, May 11 • 5–7 pm • St. James Parish Hall, 501 Killingworth Rd, Dinner includes slow-cooked pulled pork, roll, coleslaw, pasta salad, baked beans, homemade dessert, coffee/tea and lemonade/iced tea. Everything made fresh on site. (BBQ sauces on the side.) Adults $15, seniors $12, children $6 (2 and under free). Takeout available.
All proceeds go to the American Cancer Society. Call Elaine: 860-345-7755 to order take out prior to event. For info contact Jere Adametz: 860-685-0688.

HVFC Auxiliary Annual Chowder Sale
Mon, May 27 • Event held across from the town green immediately following the Memorial Day parade. A cup of chowder is $3; a quart will be sold for $10. Quarts should be ordered in advance by calling 860-345-8245 and they must be picked up by 11 a.m. in the kitchen. Proceeds will benefit the Auxiliary to help with their various projects and donations.

St. James Episcopal Church Barn and Shed Sale
Sat, June 8 • 9-2 Come browse the Barn and Yard Sale for large items not usually found at tag sales: table saw, large truck toolbox, windows, garden tools, etc. Rain or shine at St. James Episcopal Church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Got Mulch? The Higganum-Haddam Sportsman’s Club Annual Mulch Sale
Sat–Sun, May 4–5 • 9 am–5 pm (while supply lasts) • Front of the red barn next to Hall’s Power Equipment, 817 Saybrook Rd (Rt. 154).
Scott’s bagged brown mulch for $3/bag. The product can be loaded into customer vehicles, or we provide delivery for an additional donation. Special thanks to the Scott’s Company for their generous donation, and to Hall’s for the use of their yard.

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Boy Scouts Can and Bottle Drive  
Sat Jun 1 • 9 am–2 pm • Community Center in Higganum. Support the Boy Scouts!

Haddam Meadows State Park Spring Invasive Plant Cleanup  
Sat, May 11 (Rain date: May 18) • 9 am–noon • Meet at the bench to the left of the boat launch. We remove oriental bitter-sweet and other invasives and pick up litter. Adults and youths (under 16 years old accompanied by an adult) should dress for the weather, bring garden loppers or a saw, sunscreen and first aid supplies. Snacks provided. Do not bring pets. Volunteers with dump trucks and Haddam stickers needed.

To volunteer, email Cherry Czuba at cherry@comcast.net.

GED Testing Sites in Middletown and Old Saybrook  
Adult Education has two convenient locations to take your GED exam. Both are official Pearson Vue Authorized GED Testing Centers. Free GED tutoring is also available at both venues. No charge for Haddam and Higganum residents. Call 860-343-6044 for more info.

Spring Sale at Wesleyan Potters!  
Sat, May 11 • 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. • 350 South Main St, Middletown.
Work by more than 30 artists will feature unique gift ideas just in time for Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, graduations and the bridal season.
Demonstrations of pottery making, jewelry making, and handweaving are scheduled throughout the day. Also bake sale and door prizes. All proceeds benefit local artists and Wesleyan Potters/Scholarship Funds. For more info, 860-347-5925 or www.wesleyanpotters.com.

THE BUTTONWOOD TREE  
605 Main Street, Middletown  
860-347-4957, www.buttonwood.org

SPECIAL EVENTS
Art Exhibit: Journeys • May 1–31 • Free.
Reception: Sat, May 4, 2-4 pm
Ruth LeBar’s photography invites viewers into intimate and sometimes surprising conversations with the visual world. What is the essential nature of rocks, plants, and animals, and their connection possibilities with humans?

12th Annual Composer and Improviser’s Festival • Sat, May 4 • 8–10 pm • $20. A tremendous evening of new jazz featuring bassist Joe Fonda, percussionist Kevin Norton, cornet player Taylor Ho Bynum.

Steve Dedman & Peter Lehndorff • Thu, May 9 • 8–10 pm • $15 • Spend an evening with two exceptional singer-songwriters. The songwriter behind Plywood Cowboy, Steve Dedman’s songs earned a spot on the 2018 Grammy ballot.

Coconuts • Fri, May 10 • 8–10 pm • $15 • A rockin’ comedy party! Audiences of all ages are captivated by the band’s high energy music and comedy mix. Classic rock favorites you can sing along with, original songs and parodies, audience participation and a chance to dance are served up in the perfect recipe.

Sunny Train • Sat, May 11 • 2–4 pm • $5 suggested donation • Lala and Christopher are professional musicians and educators dedicated to providing interactive family music entertainment for all ages.

Al Copley with Fran Dance • Sun, May 11 • 8–10 pm • $25 • Pianist and singer; arranger and co-founder of “Roomful of Blues”—the renowned American jump band nominated for two Grammy Awards.

Continued on pg. 31
Masonicare at Chester Village offers a gracious lifestyle that is truly carefree. Here you can live surrounded by nature, a stone’s throw from great culture, eateries and theatre. Come discover all our vibrant community has to offer!

For more information, call 860-342-8258 or visit us at www.masonicare-chestervillage.org
Sky Alan • Fri, May 17 • 8–10 pm • Call for cost • Sky is a musician within the conscious music community, inspired by artists such as Medicine for the People and Tubby Love. His lyrics provide uplifting, heartfelt messages, accompanied by his ukulele and guitar, collaborating upbeat, island reggae, folk jam vibes.

Deborah Davis • Sat, May 18 • 8–10 pm • $25 • Back again by popular demand Deborah Davis, Ben Rosenblum (piano), Marty Jaffey (bass).

Matt Dwonszak Trio • Fri, May 24 • 8–10 pm • $12 • The trio consists of musicians whom Matt went to school and played with over the past ten years. The trio’s music has hints of Hard Bop, Latin Jazz, Bossa Nova, Funk and Modern Jazz.

An Evening with Rupert Wates. Andrew Biagiarelli opens • Sat, May 25 • 8–10 pm • $15 • Rupert won the coveted ‘Artist Of The Year’ award twice on the international house concert network Concerts In Your Home. Andrew Biagiarelli spent his early 20s traveling the American West with a backpack and a guitar. A natural storyteller, he weaves a tapestry of songs and tales of his travels into his live performances.

The Rough & Tumble • Fri, May 31 • 8–10 pm • $12 • The Rough & Tumble are as easy to detect as a stray dog on your doorstep—and as difficult to send home. The dumpster-folk, thriftstore-Americana duo consists of Mallory Graham and Scott Tyler.

Open Mic
EVERY MONDAY
Anything Goes Open Mic • 7–10 pm (sign up starts at 6:30) • $5 (includes pizza!). Sharpen your skills in a judgement-free environment. Whether seasoned or new, performances of any kind encouraged.

Moments of Gratitude • 8–8:15 pm • During Open Mic both Buttonwood Tree volunteers and guests encouraged to share our gratitude to build positive energy and encouragement!

1ST THURSDAY
Bob Gotta’s Acoustic Open Mic • May 2 • 7–9 pm • $5. The oldest continually running open mic in CT. Buttonwood offers a Steinway piano, full sound system, beverages, snacks, and a friendly community.

3RD SATURDAY
Teen Open Mic • May 18 • 3–5 pm • $5 • Ages 12-18. Perform any type of art. Bands welcome. Call for details. Whether first time performer or experienced musician, poet, or artist, The Buttonwood Tree is a positive, supporting environment for teens to perform. Funded in part by the Community Foundation of Middlesex County. Jack Zaino hosts.

Personal Development
1ST & 3RD TUESDAY
Laugh Yoga • May 7 and 21 • 6–7 pm • Donations appreciated • Hosted by Mylene on first Tuesday and Dawn on third Tuesday. Using child-like play with meditation, breathing exercises and laughter, it decreases anxiety, blood pressure, and stress. Laugh Yoga is the only technique allowing adults to achieve sustained hearty laughter without involving cognitive thought.

EVERY WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
Simple Tai Chi • Wed 6:30–7:30, Thu 12:15–1:15 pm • Come follow along and learn techniques to reduce stress and improve your balance. You may attend either time slot.

Continued on pg. 32
Shaking the Tree — Gong and Sound Meditation • May 16 • 7–9 pm • $10 suggested donation • Andrew uses many different sound tools and percussion affects including but not limited to: gongs, bells, ocarinas, drums, horns, shakers, and singing bowls. Tell a friend, bring the family, bring a blanket and pillow.

EVERY SATURDAY

Aligned with Source: Personal Development Workshop • 10:30 am–noon • $10 suggested donation • Explore simple concepts of living in awareness that open you up to the wonders of life; help you discover who you are and let go of fear. Each session ends in a powerful guided meditation. May 4–Control; May 11–Manifesting Through the Light; May 18–The Eternal Child; May 25–Tapping into Higher Frequencies.

Other Programs

4TH THURSDAYS

Middlesex Drum Circle • May 23 • 7–9 pm • $5 suggested donation • Andrew Prue leads a fun and exhilarating session. Extra percussion instruments available, though you are encouraged to bring your own. No reservations necessary.

2ND & 4TH SATURDAYS

NEW Music Workshop • May 11, 25 • 1–4 pm • $10 non-members; $5 members • Inviting all levels and ages! Engage in music discussions, ear training, scales, modes, arpeggios, circle of fifths and fourth and practice methods.

BRAINERD MEMORIAL LIBRARY

920 Saybrook Road, Haddam

To register/more info: 860-345-2204, or visit www.brainerdlibrary.lioninc.org and click on calendar for date. Like us on Facebook!

ADULT PROGRAMS

Macramé Madness
Sat, May 4 • 11:30 am–1:30 pm
For ages 8+. Make a mini macramé plant holder. All supplies provided, including a small plant. This is a buddy program: parents, grandparents, siblings, etc. work paired to help younger learners complete the craft. Registration required.

After Hours Concert with Joe Flood
Sat, May 18 • 6:30 pm
Journeyman/songwriter Joe Flood brings his considerable storytelling skills to bear on “A Troubadour’s Tour of Historic Nantucket”, co-produced with bassist Andres Villamil under the auspices of the Nantucket Historical Association(NHA).

CHILDREN’S PROGRAMS

To register or for more info: 860-345-2204, or visit www.brainerdlibrary.lioninc.org and click on calendar for date.

Preschool Story Time • Every Tue • 10:30 am • For ages 2–5 but siblings welcome. Activities include stories, songs, finger plays and crafts.

Saturday Story Time • Sat, May 4 • 10:30 am • For ages 2–5 but siblings welcome. Join us on the first Saturday every month for stories, songs, finger plays, and crafts. Theme: Monsters.
make a flannel board monster during storytime and make a monster to take home!

**Music with Margie** • Thu, May 9, 30 • 10:30 am • For ages 2–6. Theme: May Flowers, Butterflies, & Farms. Margie’s multi-sensory program builds skills that children need to reach the developmental goals for kindergarten.

**Toddler Tunes** • Thu, May 2, 16, 23 • 10:30 am • For ages 1–3 but siblings always welcome. Music and movement program for toddlers and their caregivers. Join us to sing nursery rhymes, dance, make music, read a simple story. Get ready to hear a guitar, saxophone, trombone and tuba!

**LEGO™ Club** • 1st & 3rd Tue • 5–6 pm • Ages 5 and up. Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays monthly. Each month features one unique theme and one free build. Creations put on display.

**Beginner Harmonica Class** • Wed, May 15 • 6–7 pm • Must be in grades 4–12, no exceptions. Learn harmonica basics including chords, breathing techniques, rhythm, and improvisational skills. Lesson includes a free Hohner Special 20 harmonica to take home! Note: Space limited, registration required.

**Macramé Madness** Sat, May 4 • 11:30 am–1:30 pm • For ages 8+. Make a mini macramé plant holder. All supplies provided, including a small plant. This is a buddy program: parents, grandparents, siblings, etc. work paired. Note: space limited, registration required.

**Brainerd Library’s Little Sprouts** • Visit our greenhouse where you can plant seeds and watch them grow. In the summer, we transplant them together into our Brainerd’s Veggie Patch.

**TEEN PROGRAMS**

- **Teen Advisory Board** Thu, May 9 • 6–7 pm • Grades 6–12. What can your library do for you? Join BML’s Teen Advisory Board to find out! Voice your ideas for improved young adult (YA) services, help plan YA events and activities, help develop the YA collection, and assist with Children’s programming. Participation counts toward community services hours and looks great on college and job applications! Contact Kristen, 860-345-2204 or kcarpentier@brainerdlibrary.org.

- **New Teen Lounge** We are always updating the space with comfy furniture, cool stuff to do, and even some crafts! (The chalkboard wall is pretty awesome!) Check out your new space anytime; it’s always open during library hours!

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- Diabetic Foot Care
- Arthritic Feet
- Skin Conditions
- Flat Feet
- Bunions
- Infections
- Fractures/Dislocations
- Sprains/Strains
- Hammertoes
- Fungus Nails
- Sports Medicine
- Geriatric Foot Care
- Diabetic Foot Care
- Arthritic Feet
- Skin Conditions
- Flat Feet
- Bunions
- Infections
- Fractures/Dislocations
- Sprains/Strains
- Hammertoes
- Fungus Nails

**Exit 7 Off Route 9 North (Goodspeed Opera Exit) Take Left at End of Exit Swing Bridge Market Place • Haddam (1606 Saybrook Rd., Next to Kountry Gal Salon) 860-345-3674**

**HADDAM FOOT CARE SPECIALISTS**
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Cleaning Services: Need some help to get your home clean? I’d be happy to help. I have 15+ years of experience, offer reliable services, reasonable rates, and we do an amazing job. I have excellent references, insurance, bonding. Please call or text for free estimates. Kasia 860-510-2662.


WANTED
Caregiver/Assistant: Tidy up, prepare some meals, accompany appointments, errands. Able to lift laundry, groceries, walker, Drive. Age: between 21-45. Fridays 4 hours/day. Interested? Email contactrachel@gmail.com.

Books, Paintings, CDs, DVDs: Higganum collector looking to downsize. Thousands of quality books and fine paintings for sale. Call Jaime 203-530-6715.

SERVICES/EMPLOYMENT
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Window Sash Repair: All types of wooden sashes repaired far below replacement cost. Historical windows/conventional. Avg. $75/sash. Higganum craftsman. 508-292-4510 or CPitruzzello@Verizon.net.

Cat Sitting Service: Amanda’s Paw Pals, LLC is a local in-your-house cat sitting company. We cater exclusively to cats. Visit www.amandaspawpals.com and see how we can help. Kitty will thank you! 860-338-7135.

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Pet Care: experienced, insured and bonded pet sitter/walker with local references. Loving, reliable care for all animals: midday outings for dogs, elderly pet care, medication administering, and overnight sitting. Sarah at petticoftca@aol.com or 860-922-8917.

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HK REC DEPARTMENT
Mail: PO Box 569, Drop-in: 91 Little City Rd., Higganum, white house in front
HKHS • To register for any program, 860-345-8334 or visit www.hkrec.com.

SPECIAL DISCOUNT TICKET PROGRAMS
• To register or for more info, 860-345-8334 or visit www.hkrec.com.

CT Science Center • All year • Fee: $17 for Adults (Save $7 off gate price.)

PRE-SCHOOL & YOUTH PROGRAMS
• To register or for more info, 860-345-8334 or visit www.hkrec.com.

Skyhawks Soccer and T-Ball • Tue, May 7–June 4 • 3:45–5 pm • $75 (non-res. + $10) • HES Gym/outside.
Boys/Girls ages 4–6. Younger children learn fundamentals and older children improve their skills in a safe, non-competitive environment.

YOUTH PROGRAMS
• To register or for more info, 860-345-8334 or visit www.hkrec.com.

Engineering Workshops • Grades K–4. A mix of Engineering and hands-on activities. All sessions 3:30–5 pm, $22 per session, (non-residents + $10).
Rocket Cars • KES Rm. 14: Tue, May 7; HES Rm. 17: Wed, May 8; BES Library: Fri, May 10 • Design, build, and race model rocket cars! Students take home the rocket cars they engineer in class.
Young Chefs of HK • Boys/girls grades 1–5 • Wed • 4:15–5:45 pm • $26 each session, includes food (non-res. + $10) • HKHS B-112 Offers cooking classes in a safe environment encouraging discovery and creativity, using a mise en place technique (“everything in its place.”). Student leaves each class with info on how to recreate each dish and more recipes for their family to try.
Workshops: Jun 5–Homemade chicken nuggets, fruit smoothies
Archery • Wed, May 1–29 • 6:30–7:30 pm • $65 (non-res. + $10) • HKHS Auxiliary Gym/outside.
Boys/Girls ages 8–17, beginners. Teaches proper form, vocabulary, techniques, historical info and the different styles throughout various cultures. Equipment provided.

AQUATIC PROGRAMS
• To register or for more info, 860-345-8334 or visit www.hkrec.com.

Toddler Swim Class
Tue/Thu, May 14–Jun 6 • $70/$56 w/pool membership (non-res. + $10) • HKHS Pool Parent/Tot: 9 months–3 year • 6:30–7 pm • A parent or guardian must accompany the child in the water at all times.
Pre-School Swim: Age 3 • 7–7:30 pm

FIELD HOCKEY FUNDAMENTALS • Wed, May 1–June 5 • 5:30–6:30 pm • HKHS Field (TBD)/Fieldhouse • $72, (non-residents + $10)
Girls grades 4–6. Covers the game rules, playing positions, stick handling skills, defensive and offensive skills, and more.

Skyhawks Sunday Flag Football • Sun, May 5–June 9 (no 5/26) • 9–10:30 am • $80 (non-res. + $10) • HKHS Multi-Use Field.
Boys/Girls grades 1–6. Participants learn skills on both sides of the ball including the core components of passing, catching, and de-flagging or defensive positioning. Recommended for beginner to intermediate athletes.

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ADULT PROGRAMS

To register or for more info, 860-345-8334 or visit www.hkrec.com.

Canine Encounters: Dog Obedience • Thu, May 2–Jun 6 • 5:30–6:30 pm • Parmelee Farm, Killingworth • $98/ $78 for repeating students (non-residents + $10).

Dogs ages 5 months and up. 1st class is theory for owners only in HKHS Lower Media. Classes provide socialization in a group setting and enhance the relationship between owner and dog. Communication, positive reinforcement, repetition, consistency, and timing combined to establish bonding and skills. Basic commands (sit, stay/wait, down, heel, recall—come when called, and stand).

Adult Horseback Riding

Thu, May 2–23 Sycamore Farm, 118 Christian Hill Rd., Higganum • 5:30–7 pm. • Max: four per time slot • $165 each session, (non-residents + $10)

All equipment provided including Western and English saddle and helmet. Wear long pants. Heeled shoe (boots) preferred.

Basic Boating Safety Class • Tue and Thu, May 21, 23 & 28 • 6–9 pm • HES All-Purpose Rm. • $15 (non-residents + $5)

This 10-hour D.E.E.P. course covers navigation rules, legal requirements, safety afloat and other topics that help students become safe and knowledgeable boaters. Students passing the course satisfy the requirements for the CT Safe Boating Certificate and Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

ARTS CENTER AT KILLINGWORTH

All gallery shows, events, classes and workshops held at Spectrum Gallery, 61 Main Street, Centerbrook. More info, 860-767-0742 or spectrumartgallery.org.

Call for Artists

All submissions:
Spectrumartgallery.org/future-exhibitions or email 3-4 high resolution jpegs of work with titles, medium, and dimensions to Barbara@spectrumartgallery.org.

Essex Green Summer Arts Festival, Sat/Sun, Jun 15-16. Annual event includes an outdoor festival on the Essex Town Green and a Gallery Group Show. Artists invited to participate on the Green can submit to a 6-week show at Spectrum Gallery in Centerbrook (May 31-Jul 14; Receiving: May 19-23). Submit early, space fills.

Summer Arts Festival

Fourth Annual Summer Outdoor Arts Festival, Sat/Sun, Jun 15-16 • Essex Town Green (12 Main St.). Featuring local and regional painters, photographers and mixed media artists and artisans. Concurrent six-week exhibit at Spectrum Gallery of select pieces of artists from the Festival through July 14.

Adult Art Classes and Workshops at Spectrum Gallery

Beginning Digital Photography Class. Learn about your camera controls, exposure, shutter speed, aperture, white balance, ISO, lenses and printing. It is recommended that students have a DSLR or Mirrorless camera for full control. Other digital cameras such as a point and shoot or cell phone also accepted. First two classes and

Continued on pg. 38
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Other branch locations: Essex (2), Madison, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook
last class held at Spectrum Gallery. Third and fourth classes are at Chatfield Hollow, Killingworth and Hammonasset State Park. Wed, May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 (makeup Jun 5) • 12:30–2:30 pm. • $150. Members save $15.

Late Spring/Early Summer Watercolor Studio. Learn/review the steps of using transparent watercolor such as building up color from light to dark, painting flat washes, graded washes, layering transparent washes, and wet on wet techniques. All levels welcome but beginning contour drawing highly recommended. Material list available. • Thu, May 2, 9, 16, 23; Jun 6 (makeup Jun 13) • 12:30–3 pm • $160. Members save $16.

Spring Acrylic Studio. Develop confidence with better drawing, composition and color theory techniques. Work from reference photos (yours or supplied) of primarily landscape or still life images. All levels welcome. • Fri, May 3, 10, 17, 31; Jun 7 (makeup Jun 14) • 12:30–2:30 pm • $160. Members save $16.

Paper Basket Workshop. Use painted watercolor paper to make a square or rectangular basket. Learn basic basketry techniques to weave the paper strips into a colorful basket. • Sun, May 19 • 12:30–4:30 pm • $100, $25 material fee paid to instructor. (Members save $10).

Gourd Ornament Workshop. Learn to design a gourd with tape, circles, and a ruler. Wood burn the design and apply metallic ink dyes and other fun embellishments. Sun, Jun 2 • 12–5 pm • $60, $10 material fee paid to instructor. (Members save $6).

Early Summer Botanical Workshop. Learn how to press botanicals to heavy card stock and create cards and larger pieces suitable for framing. Supplies include an abundance of pressed botanicals, cards and paper. Sun, Jun 9 • 1–4 pm • $45, $10 material fee paid to instructor. (Members save $4.50).

Fluid Painting: Dirty Pour Workshop. Discover the world of fluid painting as you layer acrylic paints of different densities adding additives such as silicone, dimethicone, alcohol, Dawn Soap with a result of gorgeous combinations. No experience necessary. • Sun, Jun 16 • 1:30–4 pm • $40, $20 material fee paid to instructor. (Members save $4).

Summer Camp Registration at Arts Center Killingworth
Registration now open. Fashionistas can register for either week or both weeks. Each participant must supply own sewing machine.

Fashion Week One. Ages 11–15. Mon–Fri, July 8–12 • 9 am–5:30 pm • Cost: $360 per week per registrant, $180 deposit.
Mornings: Work with a professional illustrator, learning to draw the fashion silhouette as live models pose for your sketches. End the week with a portfolio ready piece.

Afternoons: Work with professional seamstresses, learning to read, pin and cut a pattern of your choice. Construct and finish your garment by sewing and adding accessories. Professional hair and makeup stylists help prepare you for the end-of-the-week photo shoot and fashion show. Model your creations for friends and family!

**Fashion Week Two. Ages 11-15. Mon–Fri, July 15–19 • 9 am–5:30 pm • Cost: $360 per week per registrant, $180 deposit. • This year’s design muse is the feminine and rebellious Miu Miu design house. Learn sketching from a live model and design your own Miu Miu inspired creations. Afternoons, sew your creations and add details. The week ends with a portfolio-ready fashion illustration and a turn on the runway for family and friends.**

**Nature Art Camp. Ages 7-11. Mon–Fri, July 22–26 • 9 am–4 pm • Cost: $325 per camper, with a $162 deposit. • Have fun drawing en plein air, painting and sculpting on the grounds of the Arts Center. One-day visit to Spectrum Art Gallery in Centerbrook.**

**HOUSE OF WORSHIP EVENTS**

**St. James Episcopal Church**
Corner of Route 81 and Little City Road, Higganum

**Barn and Shed Sale**
Sat, Jun 8 • 9 am–2 pm
Come browse the Barn and Yard Sale for large items not usually found at tag sales: table saw, large truck toolbox, windows, garden tools, etc. Rain or shine.

**COMBINED CHURCH EVENT**

**St. James Episcopal Church**
**Higganum United Methodist Church**

**Combined Vacation Bible School**
Mon–Fri, Jul 15–19 • 5:30-7:30 pm • Higganum Methodist, 248 Saybrook Road, Higganum

Plans are well underway for HUMC and St. James Episcopal’s Hero Central Vacation Bible School. This superhero adventure experience includes music, bible fun, cool crafts, hands-on mission work, delicious dinner/snacks, games and more. Children, pre-school-6th grade are invited to participate. To register, call 860-345-4622 or email: vssofhigganumc@gmail.com.
May

2 THURSDAY
Planning and Zoning Commission*
Town Hall • 7 p.m.

4 SATURDAY
Town Wide Tag Sale
8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Higg./Haddam Sportsmen Mulch Sale
817 Saybrook Rd. • 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
(See page 28)

6 MONDAY
Club 60 Meeting
Senior Center • 1 p.m.
Board of Education Annual Meeting
High School Auditorium • 7 p.m.

7 TUESDAY (Election Day)
School Budget Referendum
All polling locations. • 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Brainerd Library Knitters
Library Comm. Rm. • 3-4:30 p.m.
Board of Education Meeting
Central Office • 7 p.m.

8 WEDNESDAY
Economic Development Commission*
Community Center • 6:30 p.m.
Town Budget Public Hearing*
Firehouse • 6:30 p.m.

9 THURSDAY
Building Committee Meeting*
Town Office Building • 6:30 p.m.

11 SATURDAY
Household Hazardous Waste Day
Essex Transfer Station • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Community Closet Open
Annex • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Haddam Meadows Cleanup
Haddam Meadows boat launch • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
St. James Pulled Pork Dinner
St. James Church • 5-7 p.m

13 MONDAY
VFW Auxiliary Meeting
Community Center • 11 a.m.
Board of Selectmen Meeting*
Town Hall • 6:30 p.m.
Board of Finance Budget Meeting*
Town Annex • 6:30 p.m.

16 THURSDAY
Planning and Zoning Commission*
Town Hall • 7 p.m.

20 MONDAY
Committee on Aging*
Haddam Neck Fairgrounds • 10 a.m.
Club 60 Meeting
Senior Center • 1 p.m.
Board of Finance Meeting*
Town Annex • 6:30 p.m.

16 WEDNESDAY
Conservation Commission*
Community Center • 7 p.m.

20 THURSDAY
Zoning Board of Appeals*
Town Hall • 7:30 p.m.

June

1 SATURDAY
Boy Scott Can and Bottle Drive
Community Center • 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Household Hazardous Waste Day
Essex Transfer Station • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

(*All town meetings are open to the public)