

Town of Chester



Annual Report 7/2010 – 6/2011

A Special Thanks and Dedication

Special thanks are due to the members of the Energy Subcommittee of the Chester Conservation Commission. This subcommittee was established in November of 2010, and the result of the hard work of this Energy Subcommittee will not only save the Town of Chester money, but will reduce carbon emissions contributing to Climate Change, while serving as a model for businesses and residents to follow.

The members of this subcommittee were charged with reviewing and researching all areas of energy use in all town buildings, and providing valuable information and assistance to residents on topics including energy conservation, renewable energy systems and related topics. Each one of these volunteers has considerable expertise in energy conservation and renewable energy. They came together to develop A Comprehensive Energy Plan for Chester and by the spring of 2011 presented that plan to the Board of Selectman. This Clean Energy Roadmap offers recommendations that will reduce the Town's energy consumption, realize cost savings, and promote policies and strategies for energy conservation, including the use of renewable energy. Again, our special thanks go to the following Energy Subcommittee members:

Peter Harding	Rick Holloway
Karen Kari	Roger Koontz
Christine Nelson	Sandy Prisloe
Jennifer Rannestad	Pat Woomer



TOWN HALL OF CHESTER

Address: 203 Middlesex Avenue
Chester, CT 06412
Telephone: 860-526-0013
Facsimile: 860-526-0004
Official Town Web Site: www.chesterct.org

TOWN HALL DIRECTORY

Animal Control	767-3219	
Assessor	extension 512	assessor@chesterct.org
Development Office		
Building	extension 207	bldgofficial@chesterct.org
Fire Marshal	extension 212	firemarshal@chesterct.org
Inland Wetlands Officer	extension 212	inlandwetlands@chesterct.org
Planning and Zoning	extension 208	zoningofficial@chesterct.org
Sanitarian	extension 206	sanitarian@chesterct.org
Finance	extension 215	finance@chesterct.org
First Selectman	extension 202	firstselectman@chesterct.org
Administrative Assistant	extension 202	adminasst@chesterct.org
Human Services	extension 213	humanservices@chesterct.org
Information	extension 202	info@chesterct.org
Judge of Probate	860-510-5028	
Parks and Recreation	extension 223	parkrec@chesterct.org
Police Services		
Resident Trooper	526-3605	policervices@chesterct.org
Emergency	911	
Registrar of Voters	extension 211	registrar@chesterct.org
Tax Collector	extension 513	taxcollector@chesterct.org
Town Clerk	extension 511	townclerk@chesterct.org
Treasurer	extension 214	treasurer@chesterct.org
Water Pollution Control Auth.	extension 230	wpca@chesterct.org

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

Chester Elementary School	23 Ridge Road	526-5797
Fire Department	6 High Street	526-0019
John Winthrop Junior High School	Warsaw Street, Deep River	526-9546
Meeting House	4 Liberty Street	526-0015
Public Library	21 West Main Street	526-0018
Public Works Department	16 Grote Road	526-0020
Valley Regional High School	Kelsey Hill Road, Deep River	526-5328

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Served Fiscal Year: July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

Selectmen

Thomas E. Marsh 11/22/11
Tommy Karl Englert 11/22/11
Lawrence Mirl Sypher 11/22/11

Town Clerk & Registrar of Births, Marriages & Deaths

Debra Germini Calamari 01/06/14
Asst: Sharon S. Echtman

Town Treasurer

Elizabeth A. Netsch 11/19/13
Julie Netsch, Deputy 11/19/13

Tax Collector

Madaline A. Meyer 11/19/13
Tax Clerk: Deborah Devine Pagel

Board of Finance

Joyce A. Aley 11/17/15
Jennifer Hummel Rannestad 11/17/15
David W. Cohen 11/19/13
Richard H. Morrow, Jr. 11/19/13
Virginia Edmands Carmany, Chmn. 11/22/11

Board of Finance Alternates

Bruce N. Bickford 11/17/15
Richard Christian Nankee 11/19/13
Michael A. Sanders 11/22/11

Board of Education

James P. Gordon, Jr. 11/05/13
Carol A. Johnson 11/05/13
Ashley Nicole Marsh 11/05/13
Margaret Dupont Reyer 11/05/13
Lianne Elizabeth Rutty 11/05/13
Amy Helland Safran 11/05/13
Wendy Calamari King, Chmn. 11/08/11
Laurie Rubinow 11/08/11
Eileen Brower Sypher 11/08/11

Board of Assessment Appeals

Dudley W. Clark, Jr. 11/19/13
Daniel M. Watts 11/19/13
Bruce H. Watrous, Chmn. 11/22/11

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Elizabeth B. Gourlay 11/19/13
Andrew P. Landsman 11/19/13
Albert G. Bisacky, Chmn. 11/22/11
Peter Daniel DeLisa 11/22/11
Caryl Horner 11/22/11
Kim S. Senay 11/22/11
Sally A. Sanders 11/22/11

Planning and Zoning Commission

Errol F. Horner 11/17/15
Steven E. Merola 11/17/15
Keith Walter Scherber 11/17/15
Janet Cummings Good 11/19/13
Michael A. Sanders 11/19/13
Melvin F. Seifert 11/19/13
Michael W. Joplin, Chmn. 11/22/11
Jon Mark Lavy 11/22/11
Virgil J. Lloyd 11/22/11

Planning and Zoning Commission Alternates

Sally L. Murray 11/17/15
Pantelis Kehayias 11/19/13
Louis Robert Desjardins 11/22/11

Library Trustees

Sandra Senior-Dauer 11/17/15
Barbara Prestley Standke 11/17/15
Molly W. Lund 11/19/13
Teresa C. Schreiber, Chmn. 11/19/13
Margaret A. Carter-Ward 11/22/11
Edith M. Prisloe 11/22/11

Regional Board of Education

Pamela M. Christman 11/03/15
Richard H. Strauss 11/05/13
Elaine M. Fitzgibbons 11/08/11

Registrar of Voters

Charlene O. Janecek 01/05/15
Katherine M. Marsh 01/05/15

Water Pollution Control Authority

Albert Arthur Armington 11/19/13
Samuel H. Chorches 11/19/13
Leroy Edward Ward, III, Chmn. 11/19/13
E. John King, Jr. 11/22/11
James K. Pease 11/22/11

Zoning Board of Appeals

John J. DeLaura, Jr. 12/31/13
Michael Robert Desnoyers 12/31/13
Mark C. Borton 12/31/11
Mario s. Gioco, Chmn. 12/31/11
James Edward Miller 12/31/11

Zoning Board of Appeals Alternates

Alexander Charles Stein 12/31/13
Robert M. Gorman 12/31/11
Justin M. Kronholm 12/31/11

Justices of the Peace

Mario Gioco	01/07/13
Margaret E. Gister	01/07/13
Paul R. Hinkel	01/07/13
Christopher Komondy	01/07/13
Marguerite A. Komondy	01/07/13
Carl F. Manning	01/07/13
Emily S. Masters	01/07/13
Elizabeth A. Perreault	01/07/13
Harvey E. Redak	01/07/13
Anna Shubik Sweeney	01/07/13
Jerry A. Walden	01/07/13
Whitelaw Wilson	01/07/13
Melvin F. Siefert	01/07/13

Judge of Probate

Terrance D. Lomme	01/15
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State Congressman – 2nd Congressional District

Joe Courtney	01/13
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State Senator – 33rd Senatorial District

Eileen Daily	01/13
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State Representative – 36th Assembly District

Phil Miller	01/13
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APPOINTED OFFICIALS**Served Fiscal Year: July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011****Accounts Manager**

Peter Evankow	
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Accounts Clerk

Sharon S. Echtman	
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Administrative Assistant

Lynne Jacques	
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Animal Control Officer

Robert Jenkins	
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Assessor

Loretta Zdanys	
Asst: Sheila Ahearn	

Auditors

Marien & Company LLC	
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Board of Fire Commissioners

John M. Divis	11/19/13
Charlene O. Janecek	11/19/13
Peter J. Zanardi	11/19/13
Richard M. Schreiber	11/22/11
Joel P. Severance, Chmn.	11/22/11

Ex-officio members:

Richard Leighton, Fire Marshal	
Charles F. Greeney, Jr. Chief	
Thomas E. Marsh, First Selectman	

Building Official

Ronald Rose	08/14/12
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Building Clerk

Sharon S. Echtman	
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Cable Television Advisory Council

Vacancy (Town)	07/30/11
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Cedar Lake Advisory Committee

Thomas M. Kablik	07/01/11
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Cemetery Association

Robert Klomp, President	
Alan Cuneo, Vice President	
Janette DeRoo, Secretary	
Robert DeRoo, Treasurer	

Chester Housing Partnership

David Mesite	
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Citation Hearing Officers

Vacancy	11/22/11
W. Michael McCulley	11/22/11
Elizabeth A. Perreault	11/22/11
Walter L. Schreiber	11/22/11
Peter J. Zanardi	11/22/11

Community Decommissioning Advisory Committee

Vacancy (Full Member)	11/22/11
Vacancy (Alternate Member)	11/22/11

Compliance Officer

John S. Bennet	
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Connecticut River Estuary Reg. Planning Agency

Sally L. Murray	12/04/11
Thomas W. Hogarty	12/04/11

Connecticut River Estuary Transit District

Leslie B. Strauss	02/21/13
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Connecticut River Gateway Commission

Margaret Wilson	07/01/12
Vacancy, Alternate	07/01/12

Conservation Commission

Richard P. Holloway	11/01/14
Claudia W. Van Nes	11/01/14
Margot D. Burns	11/01/12
Michael P. Prisloe, Jr., Chmn.	11/01/12
Errol F. Horner	11/01/11
Vacancy	11/01/11
Vacancy	11/01/11

Director of Health

Konrad Kotrady, M.D.	02/01/12
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Emergency Management

Joel P. Severance, Director
Bruce N. Bickford, Deputy
Bruce H. Watrous, Deputy

EMS South Central CT Emerg. Med. Services

Emily S. Masters	12/01/12
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Fields/Grounds Committee for Reg. District 4

James B. Bairstow	11/22/11
Vacancy	11/22/11

Fire Marshall

Richard Leighton
David Roberge, Deputy

Harbor Management Commission

Robert L. Bachand	10/03/13
Robert E. Murac	10/03/13
Joel P. Severance, Chmn.	10/03/13
Bruce W. Coderre	10/03/11
Leroy Edward Ward III	10/03/11

Harbor Management Commission Alternates

James E. Barrington	10/03/15
Gordon W. VanNes	10/03/11

Harbor Master

George G. Bartlett - Appointed by Governor on 9/28/06

Historian

Robert Miceli

Human Services Director

Rose Bininger

Inland Wetland Officer

Anna Shubik Sweeney

Internet Access Coordinator

Rudy J. Urban, Jr.

Regional Mental Health Board

Vacancy	04/30/12
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Middlesex County Revitalization Commission

Thomas E. Marsh	11/22/11
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Municipal Agent for Children

Tri-Town Youth Service Bureau, Gail Onofrio, Director

Municipal Economic Development Commission

Michael A. Sanders	11/01/15
Vacancy	11/01/15
Stephen J. Flett, Chmn.	11/01/14
Susan Wright	11/01/14
Howard K. Haskins	11/01/13
Laurel A. Johnson	11/01/11
Macon C. Toledano	11/01/11

Park and Recreation Commission

Susan G. Hotkowski	11/01/13
Sam C. Lindberg	11/01/13
James L. Ready	11/01/12
Whitelaw Wilson	11/01/12
Jeanette Patricia Caron	11/01/11
John B. Williams, Chmn.	11/01/11
Vacancy	11/01/11

Park and Recreation Director

Elizabeth A. Netsch

Resident State Trooper

Trooper Matthew Ewing, State Police – Troop F

Retirement Board

Katherine M. Marsh	12/16/13
Van C. Standke, Chmn.	12/16/13
James P. Gordon, Jr.	12/16/12
Charlene O. Janecek	12/16/12
David W. Cohen	12/16/11

Sanitarian

Lee Vito

Tree Warden

Scot Mills	11/22/11
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Tri-Town Youth Service Bureau Representative

Vacancy	11/22/11
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Valley Shore Emergency Communications Board of Directors

John Divis	11/22/11
Charles F. Greeney, Jr.	11/22/11

Zoning Enforcement Officer

Judy Brown

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Thomas E. Marsh, First Selectman
Tommy Englert Selectman
Lawrence M. Sypher, Selectman

Fiscal 2011 brought several significant changes to the structure and service of the community. Perhaps the most significant issue before the Board of Selectmen during the first quarter of the year was the determination of service and staffing for the Assessor's office. Recent advances in technology provided for greater electronic access to public documents, as well as greater efficiency in data management. In late FY 2010 the Town contracted the services of a highly experienced interim Assessor that was charged with the task of providing an evaluation of the staffing needs of the office. Based on that report as well as surveys of services and staffing provided by towns with similar demographics to Chester, the determination was made to enter into a regional agreement with the Town of East Haddam, to provide Assessors services.

The second quarter brought state elections with all constitutional offices on the ballot. Given the serious fiscal issues faced by the State of Connecticut there was concern among municipalities that a change in the governor's office could result in additional financial burdens at the town level.

The third quarter, and specifically the winter of 2011 brought noteworthy challenges to the community. Some of the biggest snowstorms in recent history challenged our town crew and contractors as efforts were made to keep the roads passable and the village clear. Costs associated with snow removal put a serious strain on the budget with snow related expenses reaching a level twice the figure that had been budgeted. A late January snowstorm caused the collapse of roof on the Chester Community Center. As a result of the damage the building was demolished. Park and Recreation programs as well as meeting space for a variety of community organizations had to be secured elsewhere. A state Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant was filed in hopes of receiving partial funding, in addition to insurance receipts, for the replacement of the structure.

Concurrently, the Chester Library undertook serious efforts to determine the feasibility of an expansion to the library. The building, viewed by most in Chester as an architectural treasure, has significant limitations on display space, public access as well as room for congregation. An ad hoc task force was developed to spearhead the project. Preliminary efforts undertaken by the committee through the end of the fiscal year laid the groundwork for efforts to take place in FY 2012.

Construction in the village has been a major issue for the last several years with the sewer project connecting Chester to Deep River and the replacement last fiscal year of the Route 154 Bridge over Chester Creek. With those projects complete the state placed their focus on the long planned replacement of the Route 148 Bridge over Great Brook and the Main Street Bridge over Pattaconk Creek. Both projects will have a substantial impact on the economic viability of the village.

In an effort to appropriately plan for the execution of these projects another ad hoc committee was suggested, "The Main Street Project Committee". The structure of the committee was determined by the Board of Selectmen near the end of fiscal 2011, with further progress expected in early fiscal 2012.

In May of 2011 the Town approved an annual budget of \$12,555,853 which. Despite concerns early in the calendar year that state budget pressures would result in significant loss of state funding to municipalities, the new administration sought to protect state revenue streams to municipalities. As a result no tax increase was required to fund the FY 2012 budget.

In summary, FY 2011 provided challenges and opportunity to Chester. Fiscal 2012 will bring a continuation of planning and development on issues important to Chester, based on a strong fiscal and operational foundation.

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY SELECTMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Lower Connecticut Valley Selectman's Association (LCVSA), formed in 1967, brings the chief elected officials of the region together monthly to discuss common interests. Michael Pace of Old Saybrook is Chairman of the LCVSA. Some

common interests have included elderly services, public transit, solid waste disposal and regional recycling and Household Hazardous Waste facilities.

CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Connecticut River Valley Council of Elected Officials (CRVCEO) chaired by Chester First Selectman Tom Marsh, brings together seventeen towns along the Connecticut River. Officially formed in 2000 by the General Assembly, the chief elected officials of Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Lyme, Middlefield, Middletown, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Portland and Westbrook are brought together to discuss common issues.

The Council meets on a monthly basis, rotating from town to town. As a voice on legislative issues, the Council has fought in Hartford on the state budget, municipal ethics, environmental issues and other mandates.

Over the fiscal year, the Council has discussed coordinated economic planning, emergency management, regional transportation, and environmental issues.

CONNECTICUT RIVER ESTUARY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CREMPO was formed in 2004 after the 2000 Census changed the designation of areas within the nine towns from rural to urban, based on localized concentrations of population. CREMPO conducts its planning through the staff at CRERPA. CREMPO is comprised of the nine Chief Elected Officials from the towns within the CRERPA region. The MPO organization sets priorities for transportation projects within the region and adopts long range planning policies for transportation.

CRERPA has worked with CREMPO over the last year to process transportation projects and funding in coordination with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT); coordinate the Federal Certification Review Process; adopt standards for project selection; submit quarterly and annual contracts and reporting to CTDOT. Additionally, CRERPA staff assisted many member towns with road projects, corridor studies, applications for project funding, and traffic counts for selected roads. CRERPA also continues to provide comprehensive planning services for the Estuary Transit District.

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

Charlene O. Janecek, Democratic

Katherine M. Marsh, Republican

The Office of the Registrar of Voters is a position, governed by the Connecticut General Statutes and financially supported by the municipality in which the Registrars serve. Registrars are responsible for voter education, organizing and conducting the annual canvass of voters, maintaining the accuracy of the registry list, updating voters files, preparing department budgets, training election officials, working town meetings when requested, absentee ballot assistance for convalescent home residents, ensuring the proper maintenance of voting machines in preparation for their use at elections, and filing the election results with the Municipal Clerk.

Over the past year, the registrars were involved in a Gubernatorial Election, a Special Election for State Representative, and a Region 4 Referendum.

As of June 30, 2011, Chester had 2459 active registered voters; 911 democrats, 501 republicans, 1023 unaffiliated and 24 to minor parties. Chester is part of the State of Connecticut Voter Registration System. The system allows the towns direct communication via computer with the Secretary of State Office and, indirectly, with other towns and cities that are part of the centralized voter system as required by HAVA.

Although the Registrar of Voters position is an elected position, politics does not have any place in a Registrar's Office. It is the responsibility of both Registrars to ensure fair and equitable enactment of all election laws.

TOWN CLERK

Debra Germini Calamari, Town Clerk

Land Records: This fiscal year 809 instruments were recorded in the Town Clerk's Office and 17 maps were filed.

Vital Statistics: During this fiscal year as Registrar of Vital Statistics, twenty-five (25) births were registered in Chester: fourteen (14) boys and eleven (11) girls. All but two (2) children were born in other Connecticut towns. There were seven (7) residents who were married in Chester; twenty (20) residents who were married out of town; and there were thirteen (13) non-resident marriages in Chester. There were thirty-two (32) residents who died here; twenty-four (24) residents who died out of town; and eighteen (18) non-residents died in Chester.

Dog Licenses: All dogs must be licensed when they become six months of age. On the first of June, reminders are sent to all currently registered dog owners; they may license their dog in person or by mail. Rabies vaccination forms as well as spaying and neutering certificates must be submitted at the time of renewal. There were 511 dogs and 5 kennels registered during this fiscal year.

Voters: Residents may apply for admission as electors at the office of the Town Clerk on a daily basis or with the Registrar of Voters. Registrars hold special sessions prior to primaries and elections. These schedules are filed with the Town Clerk and are posted on the town sign post.

Other Duties: The Town Clerk's Office maintains and certifies agendas, meeting times and minutes of various Town boards and commissions. The Town Clerk serves as Clerk to Annual and Special Town Meetings and acts as the Custodian of the Town Seal and Registrar of Vital Statistics Seal. The Town Clerk prepares and administers annual budgets for the office and all duties and responsibilities are prescribed by State Statutes and Town Ordinances.

TOWN MEETINGS

May 3, 2011

VOTED BY REFERENDUM: To approve the Regional School District No. 4 budget of \$17,324,933 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011.

Yes: 93 No: 64

The total vote from Chester, Deep River and Essex was:

Yes: 438 No: 261

May 17, 2011

VOTED: To select the method of payment and due date of installments of property taxes in keeping with CT General Statutes 12-143 as follows:

- a. Real estate taxes due in two halves, first half due July 1, 2011 and the second half due January 1, 2012.
- b. All motor vehicle bills due in one payment of July 1, 2011
- c. All motor vehicle supplement bills due in one payment on January 1, 2012
- d. Minimum interest charge of \$2.00
- e. Negate all bills under \$5.00

VOTED: To budget for the Town of Chester for fiscal year July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 an amount totaling \$12,555,853 as recommended by the Board of Finance.

VOTED: To adopt a five year capital plan to be updated annually as recommended by the Board of Finance.

VOTED: To authorize the following transfer as recommended by the Board of Finance: \$33,000 from 20-00-01-0000-007 Capital Undesignated, to 20-00-31-0000-446, Capital Road Repairs.

VOTED: To authorize the expenditure of \$37,318 from Capital Reserve line item 20-00-36-0000-054 Public Works Building, storage.

VOTED: To authorize the expenditure of \$49,587 from Capital Reserve line item 20-00-30-0000-030 Highway equipment.

VOTED: To authorize the expenditure of \$303,000 from Capital Reserve line item 20-00-31-0000-446 Road Repairs. This appropriation is funded in the 2011/2012 fiscal year budget.

VOTED: To authorize the Treasurer to post the Capital Fund interest and closed line item balances to the Capital Undesignated line item on a quarterly basis through fiscal year end June 30, 2012.

VOTED: To authorize the First Selectman and Treasurer to borrow such sums of money from time to time as may be necessary to defray expenses of the Town in accordance with authorized appropriations of fiscal year ending June 30, 2012.

VOTED: To adopt an amendment to the Harbor Management Plan entitled "2011 Harbor Management Plan Update" as presented.

VOTED: To adopt an amendment to the municipal pension plan entitled "First Amendment to Town of Chester Retirement Plan" as presented.

VOTED: To accept two STEAP grants in the amount of \$250,000 each for use on proposed water main extensions and road construction.

VOTED: To accept a STEAP grant in the amount of \$200,000 to be used toward the Main St. renovation project.

VOTED: To authorize the expenditure of \$56,500 for the purpose of paying for the demolition and cleanup costs for the community center location, said funds to be taken from the insurance proceeds paid to the town.

TOWN WEBSITE

Rudy Urban, Jr., Internet Access Coordinator

It's been another year for the town of Chester on many levels. For me it's wrapped up another year of support for the town website. As website coordinator I have been busy updating on the Library and Park and Recreation areas as they change from season to season. For the town I perform the ongoing updates for the Elected and Appointed Officials list as well as the list of available Vacancies on Boards and Commissions. As that list sees a position filled or an individual depart the list changes. And if an elected official should find themselves moving on people can be shifted and moved to hold down the fort so to speak. The town website has been well done by another party. It is updated and kept current by them on a list of events that the town sponsors or supports and other department heads on their departments as well. I encourage all residents who have computer access to visit the website regularly. I might also say that your town Library has a computer available and you can visit the website there as well. I look to continue to full-fill the coordinator duties and hope residents find it useful.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

"Volunteer activity has been a mainstay for Chester and should be encouraged," states the Town's Vision Report. Contributions of time, energy, and skills are essential in helping to keep taxes down and promote the social and economic growth of our Town.

The Town of Chester survives on its volunteers. Volunteer possibilities can be found at Chester Hose Company, various boards and commissions, working at the polls, etc. If you have a desire to help people or provide community service, have a sense of public duty, feel a need to reciprocate because you or someone you know has received volunteer services, or just enjoy giving, your help is always needed.

How the Volunteer of the Month program works:

- Citizens nominate volunteers by letter or by filling out one of the forms available in the Selectman's Office or online at www.chesterct.org
- The Board of Selectmen reviews the nominees and selects a *Volunteer of the Month*.
- The Board of Selectmen will present each honoree with a pin and a certificate highlighting their volunteer achievements.
- A Volunteer Plaque displaying each volunteer's name and month honored will be displayed in the Town Hall for all to see.

FINANCES

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Loreta Zdanys, Assessor

Sheila E. Ahearn, Assessor's Clerk

Please allow me to introduce myself as the Town's "new" Assessor. I began here in November of 2010 and am in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays. Sheila continues as the Assessor's Clerk and is here Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. The office is closed on Fridays.

Sheila and I would like to remind Chester residents that there are a number of state and local programs providing exemptions or tax relief for those who are seniors, veterans, and active duty military, blind, totally disabled and emergency ambulance and fire personnel. There is also a renters' rebate program. For information regarding eligibility, income requirements, and filing periods for the programs please call our office at 860-526-0013 ext. 512 or visit our office on the second level of the Town Hall.

The Assessor's 2009 Grand List prior to the actions of the Board of Assessment Appeals is \$499,445,691. The 2009 Grand List is the list that generates the taxes that provide the primary amount of the revenue that is utilized in running the Town of Chester for the 2010/2011 fiscal period.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Bruce H. Watrous, Chairman

The Board of Assessment Appeals is designed to serve as an appeal body for taxpayers who believe the town erred in the valuation of their property or erroneously denied them their exemptions.

It is the duty of the three elected members of the Board to process each appeal by reviewing the property in question to determine whether the assessment should be reduced, raised or left unchanged. The Board by law notifies each taxpayer in writing as to the action taken in response to the appeal.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Elizabeth A. Netsch, Treasurer

The Treasurer manages the cash flow, investment, and borrowing of Town funds in the most profitable and safe means available. All Town funds are received and disbursed by the Treasurer, when appropriately authorized.

The Treasurer is responsible for the management of the Town General Fund and Board of Education Accounts, which include all accounts that are the depositories for the budgeted revenues and expenditures. There are 12 separate additional funds for specified programs and retirement plans maintained outside the annual budgeted General Fund. The 13 funds are deposited in 21 different accounts at 9 different institutions. The Town reports all funds on a general ledger system.

In a year of exceptionally low rates, interest earned on the General Fund, for the fiscal year 2010/2011, totaled \$16,789. Earnings on other Town accounts were \$7,224, excluding retirement funds. This interest and dividend income accumulated from the Treasurer's office between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 is revenue available to off-set future taxes or purchase goods and services for each fund.

The final payment due to the State of Connecticut for excess grant interest, received following the final audit of the 2002 refunding of the 1989 bond issue for the Chester Elementary School addition, was paid this year. Outstanding bonds include the 2002 issue for the Town Hall, due to retire in 2018 and the Clean Water debt for the 2009 sewer expansion, which will mature in 2029. In addition, the Town of Chester pays its share, based on its current average daily membership, of the Regional School District 4 bond payments.

Through optimum and safe investments, efficient management of cash flow, and careful review of all orders drawn on the General Government and Board of Education, the Treasurer provides the most effective use of the taxpayers' money.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT

Madaline Meyer, Tax Collector

The responsibilities of the Tax Office in Chester include, but are not limited to, the collection of real estate, motor vehicle and personal property taxes, which totals 6250 individual bills and an additional 461 supplemental MV bills for a grand total of 6711 bills, each of which is mailed out of our office.

We also are responsible for collecting 41 usage bills for the WPCA and new last year, we were collecting 79 benefit assessment bills that are for the real estate parcels on the sewer lines. In most cases, when a parcel sells, this new benefit assessment bill is usually paid off in full, even though it was set up as a 20 year plan with only a 2% interest rate. Our original list of 79 accounts is reduced to 54, because the owners paid in full, or the sale of the property.

Our collections for the fiscal year from July 1, 2010 thru June 30th, 2011 are as follows:

Current taxes collected = \$ 10,896,471.54 = 100.17% budgeted collections.

Back taxes were collected = \$ 149,202.18 = 248.63% budgeted collections.

Interest/warrants collected = \$ 88,597.24 = 221.00% budgeted collections.

Overall budget = \$10,977,283.00 with \$11,137,617.90 collected at 101.46%.

Our WPCA collection rate was excellent with all the 09 GL usage bills paid.

One other big responsibility that is handled by our office is the registration of aircraft based at Chester Airport. We registered 115 different aircraft, which records the owner of the aircraft, type of aircraft, FAA registration number and decal number issued at the time of current registration.

RETIREMENT BOARD

Van C. Standke, Chairman

The Town of Chester Retirement Board is made up of five Board Members appointed by the Board of Selectmen for a three-year term. Members of the Retirement Board are Van Standke, Chairman, Charlene Janecek, James Gordon, and Katherine Marsh. There is currently one open position on the Retirement Board. The Retirement Board meets quarterly, and the public is invited to attend. Meeting schedules and agendas are available on the Town web site or from the Town Clerk.

The Retirement Board administers three retirement plans: Town of Chester Retirement Plan for Town employees, the Voluntary Deferred Compensation Plan (457) for Town employees, and the Volunteer Service Award Program (VSAP) for Members of the Chester Hose Company. The Board is responsible for plan administration and investments to fund the plans.

The Town retains Milliman and Company as the actuarial firm to provide the necessary reporting and valuations for the Town Retirement Plan and VSAP. Milliman calculates the annual deposits to be made by the Town to provide the future retirement benefits for plan participants. In addition, Milliman assists the Town by providing administrative and consulting assistance.

Town Retirement Plan

The Town of Chester Retirement Plan benefitted from asset allocation and a market rebound to provide positive performance in the stock and bond markets. Assets as of June 30, 2011 were \$835,763, after benefit payments of \$24,782 and contributions during the year of \$114,253, compared to \$648,198 on June 30, 2010. Investments in this plan are managed by ING Life Insurance and Annuity Company, and consist of a money market fund, a stock fund, a bond fund and a balanced fund. Investments during the year are generally made in equal parts to each of the three investment funds, not including money market, and the year's final deposit is intended to rebalance the three funds to approximately the same amount.

Volunteer Service Award Program (VSAP)

The Volunteer Service Award Program was created to provide a retirement benefit for qualified Members of Chester Hose Company. Assets as of June 30, 2011 were \$367,802 after benefit payments of \$45,455 and including deposits during the year of \$13,840. This compares to a balance on June 30, 2010, of \$331,135. The plan assets are invested in mutual funds of the Vanguard Group.

Voluntary Deferred Compensation Plan (457)

The Voluntary Deferred Compensation Plan provides Town employees the opportunity to contribute to a personal retirement fund on a tax-favored basis. ING Life Insurance and Annuity Company administers the plan.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ESTUARY COUNCIL OF SENIORS, INC.

Paula C. Ferrara, Executive Director

The Estuary Council of Seniors, Inc. (ECSI) is a non-profit regional senior center located at 220 Main Street in Old Saybrook with café sites in Clinton, Westbrook, Chester, and Old Lyme. Since 1974, the ECSI's mission has been to promote senior's quality of life, community involvement, and independent living. Last year the ECSI provided nearly 92,000 nutritious meals including Meals On Wheels; 1,508 rides to medical outpatient appointments outside the nine-town Estuary Region; 943 free preventative health screenings, and social and exercise programs too numerous to count.

Many of our participation numbers are lower for the 2010/2011 year due to the extremely harsh winter. ECSI closed for seven days and meals were not served and we could not give rides. Many seniors also stayed home and cancelled appointments for many other days during the winter.

During the 2010/2011 fiscal year, ECSI provided 60 Chester seniors with 1,060 congregate meals and 2,220 Meals On Wheels (homebound meals). 5 Chester seniors were provided 100 rides to medical appointments outside the nine-town Estuary Region through the Stan Greimann EMOTS program. In total, 173 Chester seniors received 4,350 services through ECSI.

ECSI is funded in part by contributions from the nine towns in the Estuary Region, Senior Resources Agency on Aging with Title III funds made available under the Older Americans Act, other grants, individual donations, and fund raising efforts. Like many other non-profit organizations, ECSI's funding is being cut due to the state budget cuts to Senior Resources. I would like to thank the Town of Chester for your continued support of our programs.

For information on our breakfast and lunch nutrition program, Meals on Wheels, EMOTS, exercise programs, and social programs please call 860-388-1611 weekdays from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

HUMAN SERVICES' REPORT

Rosie Biningger, Director

“They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself” *Andy Warhol*

The Director of Human Services administers the Town's welfare programs and is responsible for planning and implementing social services programs for the adult, disabled and senior residents of the town. Disseminating information regarding the programs is the primary responsibility of the director. Information and referral is then made to the federal, state or local social service program for assistance.

Emergency assistance is provided to residents through several town programs. These programs include the Welfare Emergency Fund, the Chester Community / Fuel Fund, and the Salvation Army Emergency Fund. For this fiscal year, 59 individuals and families received help with medical costs (13), rent (5), clothing (5), food vouchers (16), and oil and electricity bills (20). 71 families qualified for the CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and 12 families qualified for Operation Fuel. For every Operation Fuel application completed, the town receives a \$21.00 reimbursement. This fiscal period \$252.00 was collected for the Emergency Fuel Fund.

As always, the community pulled together throughout the holiday season with generous donations of time, gifts, food, gift certificates and baskets. This year 48 families received Thanksgiving baskets and 56 children received toys for Christmas and free winter clothing from the "Warm the Children" program. The Salvation Army provided 15 children with "Payless" back to school shoe vouchers.

As Agent for the Elderly, the Director of Human Services continues to serve the growing population of persons over 65 years of age. Services include referral to social service programs, assistance with processing medical forms and Medicare Part D, obtaining alternate forms of housing and applying for home improvement loans and grants. Chester seniors participate in many of the following programs: ConnPACE, SNAP, QMB, Homeowner's Tax Credit, Renter's Rebate, Medical Transportation by the Estuary Council or FISH, Energy Assistance, Operation Fuel, Title XIX, Meals on Wheels, and the Department of Social Services Home Care Program for Elders.

In closing, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to all the organizations, residents, businesses, churches and synagogue for your generous donations and dedicated help for those in need.

The Human Services Director can be reached on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings 9:00-12:00 or by calling 526-0013 x213 to set up an appointment.

SANITARIAN'S REPORT

Lee Vito, Sanitarian

The Health Department has the responsibility ensuring compliance with the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health regulations and to enforce local ordinances. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following: soil testing for land subdivisions, new septic systems and septic system repairs. The Sanitarian reviews all septic system proposed plans before granting approval and issuing a permit to construct the septic system. All septic systems are then inspected to ensure compliance with the State Public Health Code.

All applications for building additions, decks, pools, etc. are also reviewed as required by State Public Health code regulations.

All food service establishments and food vendors are licensed as required by town ordinance and all are inspected regularly for compliance with the State Public Health code regulations. This includes the requirement of a certified "Qualified Food Operator" responsible for the food operations.

The Health Department responds to all complaints in a timely manner, including "anonymous complaints".

Other Health Department duties and responsibilities include inspection of school cafeterias, daycare facilities, the issuance of water well permits, lead paint investigations, pool inspections, etc. Also, the Sanitarian manages the mandatory septic tank pump out program for the WPCA and assists the WPCA in wastewater issues that affect the Town Municipal subsurface Sewage Disposal System and water quality.

For the year 2010-2011 the following were performed by the Health Department:

- New Septic Systems – 4
- Repair of Septic Systems – 16
- Well Permits – 5
- Sub-division – 0
- Food licenses issued – 20 (permanent)
- Food licenses issued – 23 (temporary)
- Food Service Inspections 75-100
- Permits for building additions, pools, decks, etc. – 21

Office hours for the Sanitarian are Mondays, 7 am – 8 am, Tuesdays, 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm, Thursdays, 7 am – 8 am. Other hours are available by appointment if necessary by calling 526-0013 ext. 206 and leaving a message. Residents are encouraged to call with any questions of if information is needed.

TRI-TOWN YOUTH SERVICES

Gail M. Onofrio, Director

Since Tri-Town Youth Services' establishment in 1984, the nonprofit has served youth (birth to 18) and their families who reside in Chester, Deep River, and Essex. The agency works with youth to strengthen connections with family, peers, school, and the community, carefully ensuring our services augment, not duplicate other programs. On the community level, Tri-Town convenes the local prevention council. The agency continues to lead community mobilization efforts around asset building through Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth of Chester, Deep River, and Essex.

Counseling and crisis intervention were provided to residents for a wide range of issues through day and evening appointments with 24-hour phone availability. Issues addressed include parenting and relationship concerns, depression, suicide ideation, sexual abuse, and substance abuse, with referrals made in some instances. Our early intervention program, the Tri-Town Juvenile Review Board hears cases of youth in trouble with the law as they are referred.

Much of our work is directed to positive youth development, parent education, and building healthy families and communities. With the school social worker, we trained Peer Advocates at Valley Regional; facilitated two youth advisory boards, organized community service activities, facilitated several mentoring programs, offered supervised teen recreation activities, a youth job bank, babysitter training classes, Homework Hangout, a Summer Co-op for middle school youth, and involvement in Safe Grad. In addition to involvement with the Early Childhood Council, parent programs are offered for parents/caregivers and their one-year-olds or two-year-olds, parent consultations, and courses such as "Getting Ready for Change" and "Internet and Technology Safety." We sponsored the twenty-first annual substance prevention/awareness week, "High on Life", successful through support from multiple facets of the community.

The Bureau's Board of Directors is comprised of three to five members from each of the three towns and a youth representative. Our special thanks to: volunteers who have donated time and talent, to local taxpayers who support the bureau by providing the matching funds needed to procure our State Department of Education grant, and to all who have made monetary donations essential for maintaining our operating budget.

VISITING NURSES OF THE LOWER VALLEY, INC.

Priscilla Munro, M.S., Executive Director

Like most providers of health care services across the United States, the Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley (VNLV) has sustained cuts in reimbursements from Medicare and other payors, and can expect additional decreases in the future, as our government grapples with a burgeoning debt crisis. Over time, these reimbursement cuts take their toll on small organizations such as VNLV. The support that we receive from the Town of Chester is more important than ever, and we are grateful for this funding. This past year we experienced nearly a 20% increase in the number of town-funded visits provided to Chester residents. Eight patients received 76 skilled nursing and home health aide visits; care that would not have been provided without the support and concern of the town.

We are pleased to report that VNLV, for the fourth year running, was rated among the top 25% of all home care agencies in the country for quality of care. Our expert and dedicated teams of nurses, therapists, social workers and health aides provided 17,242 home visits to 407 patients during the past year. Residents from Chester represent a significant portion of our case load. It is also noteworthy that 38% of our patients are age 85 and older, and over 25% live alone. Clearly, home care plays a key role in maintaining the safety and wellbeing of our aging family members and friends. VNLV also remains steadfast to its public health mission, providing weekly walk-in blood pressure screenings and flu shot clinics beginning in September. A new program was started at the United Church of Chester. Once each month, a nurse provides free blood pressure checks and cholesterol tests to any interested individual – we would welcome greater participation in this program. VNLV also provides nurse consulting services on a quarterly basis to Chester's child daycare program.

Our sister agency, Lower Valley Care Advocates, provides homemaker and personal care services to those who wish to remain at home. The community response to these services has been very positive, and our case load continues to grow. All of the staff are carefully screened, trained and bonded, and are expert at determining just what services are needed to achieve optimum health and safety at home. Please call 767-2695 for further information.

Our staff wishes to acknowledge the commitment and leadership of our volunteer board of directors: Ted Heiser, President, Arthur Henick, Peg Lieberman, Carl Manning and Skip Weisenburger, all of Chester; Judy Heiser, Nancy Kirkiles, Dick Levene and Andrew Mitchel from Essex; Russell Marth and Carl Olson from Deep River; and Susan Carpenter from Westbrook. And, a special thank you to all Chester residents who support the work of VNLV.

Please remember to vaccinate your entire family against the seasonal flu. Call us at 767-0186 for clinic dates and locations.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

The Town of Chester has in effect a Workplace Safety and Health Committee pursuant to State Law. Representatives from Chester Elementary School, Chester Parks and Recreation Commission, Chester Hose Company, Chester Public Library, the Public Works Department, the Police Department and the Town Hall make up the Committee. Meetings are held quarterly to discuss any safety and health concerns; Workers' Compensation issues; Prevention and Control measures and conduct Safety and Health Training. All new Workers' Compensation claims are reviewed to ensure that any corrective measures are immediately acted upon. As a result of the Workplace Safety and Health Committee, the Town has been successful in reducing claim activity and accidents in the workplace.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Michael W. Joplin, Chairman

During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the Commission held public hearings and regular monthly meetings to consider several Special Exception applications which ultimately contribute to the growth and future of our community.

The Commission vigorously continued its work to establish a new Village District Zone. Several public hearings were held after which recommendations for changes were considered by the Commission. The Commission adopted the new Village District Regulations on May 5, 2011 with an effective date of July 2, 2011.

All those who participated and donated their time in this process should be commended for their dedication to the Town of Chester in knowing they were a part of Chester's future.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Mario S. Gioco, Chairman

In the year 2010-2011, the ZBA heard seven cases. Five were granted, one was partially granted and denied, none were denied and one was withdrawn. The ZBA ended the year with five regular members and three alternates. The authorizing statutes allow a maximum of five members and three alternates. The Board reviewed the application process and made changes to the application to assist the residents/land owners/tenants in applying for a zoning variance and increased the fee to reflect State fee increases. As part of a continuing process, State Statutes were reviewed governing receipt of applications, conflicts of interest for Board members, exceptional difficulty and hardship, along with general procedures for public hearings, etc. The Board's goal is to make the application process and the proceedings "user-friendly."

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Ronald Rose, Building Official

From July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 the value of Building Permits totaled \$2,833,800

Fee charges for permits total:		\$34,315.83
Residential:	191	\$2,239,800.00
Commercial	35	\$594,000.00
Breakdown:		
Building Permits	73	\$2,135,800.00
Electrical Permits	44	\$ 244,000.00
Plumbing Permits	27	\$134,000.00
Heating Permits	49	\$314,000.00
Wood Stove Permits		\$6,000.00

State Education Fees submitted to the State of Connecticut during this time period \$874.06.

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT

The Estuary Transit District (ETD) was formed in 1981 by the nine towns of the Connecticut River Estuary region. The nine towns include Clinton, Chester, Deep River, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook. ETD's mission is to provide local, coordinated public transportation for all residents of the area. To meet this goal, ETD operates public transit via the 9 Town Transit (9TT) service.

9TT's four deviated fixed routes serve the main corridors of the region and provide connections to public transit providers serving the surrounding regions. The routes include the Old Saybrook to Madison Shoreline Shuttle, the Old Saybrook to Chester Riverside Shuttle, the Old Saybrook to Middletown Mid-Shore Express, and the new Old Saybrook to New London Southeast Shuttle. These routes offer free connections to the New Haven, New London/Norwich, Middletown, and Hartford area bus services.

In addition to the deviated fixed routes, 9TT provides door-to-door service throughout all nine towns of the Estuary region through its Dial-A-Ride service. As with all of 9TT's services, the Dial-A-Ride service is open to all persons with no age or disability restrictions.

In August of 2009, ETD began selling tickets and passes at area Stop & Shop stores. This resulted in an immediate increase in pass sales due to the convenience of these new outlets. ETD has also continued its increased marketing efforts, which has been extremely successful in increasing awareness of its services and correcting the misconception that its services are only for seniors. ETD also expanded the service hours of its Dial-A-Ride service to improve availability for work related trips. This combined with the marketing efforts have led to an increase in ridership of 18% over the previous fiscal year to 61,524 trips and a shift of users to 30% seniors and 70% non-seniors.

The addition of new services over the past few years had resulted in ETD out-growing its Old Saybrook offices. In September of 2009, ETD moved to a new office at 17 Industrial Park Rd Suite 6 in Centerbrook.

ETD also received over \$900,000 in capital grants to improve bus stops, improve Dial-A-Ride scheduling, purchase new buses, purchase furniture, improve on-board communications, replace computer equipment, and develop a new and improved website. Of the new buses, two will be hybrid-gasoline buses, the first of their kind in the state. Many of these purchases were made in the 2009-2010 fiscal year and continued this 2010-2011 fiscal year.

The Estuary Transit District is governed by the ETD Board of Directors made up of one representative from each town, each having a weighted vote based on the population of the town they represent. The Directors serve in a voluntary capacity to adopt policy, set budgets and conduct long term planning for the district. In 2008, the board hired First Transit, Inc., a professional transit management company, to provide an Executive Director to manage the day to day business of ETD. Regular board meetings are held on the third Friday every other month at 9:00 A.M. at the Estuary Transit District. All meetings are open to the public.

CONNECTICUT RIVER ESTUARY REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

The Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA) is in its 43rd year of planning for the nine-town Estuary region. CRERPA consists of two representatives from each member town, one representing the Board of Selectmen and the other representing the Planning Commission. The CRERPA Board meets on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Agency office in the Saybrook Junction Marketplace.

CRERPA has a staff of 7 full and part-time employees. Independent consultants are occasionally contracted on an as need basis. CRERPA is supported financially from a variety of federal, state and local sources. A significant portion of the CRERPA budget continues to be the annual contribution of its member towns, with other major support coming from the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the State Office of Policy and Management, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

CRERPA staff continues to assist member towns with local open space plans, which will serve as building blocks for a regional greenway plan. The greenway plan will be part of the background work for the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development.

INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSE AGENCY

Al Bisacky, Chairperson

Wetlands perform critical ecological and economic functions. Because of their ability to absorb water, trap sediment and filter pollutants, wetlands protect water quality and property. Wetlands, watercourses and their associated riparian zones provide essential habitat to fish and wildlife. They serve as venues for recreation, education and aesthetic enjoyment. Prior to passage of the CT Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act in 1972, between a third and half of the State's original wetlands had been destroyed because their value was not understood.

The Chester IWWA implements the State's Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act through regulations based on the Act. Criteria for decision-making outlined in the Act direct the agency to consider the short and long-term effects of proposed activities on wetlands, and to seek alternatives that minimize impact while allowing property owners use of their land.

Agency regulations are periodically updated based on guidance from the DEP. The results and impacts from relevant court cases, such as the River Sound Development in Old Saybrook are considered in these updates and in the Agency's deliberations so that the wetland resources in Chester benefit from the most current information and thinking. Agency members continuously review educational CDs produced by the DEP, and several members attend training each year.

A wetland permit is generally required for activities in or within 100 feet of a wetland or watercourse. An activity further than 100 feet away may also be regulated if it is likely to impact a wetland or watercourse or wildlife that may in turn impact the wetland. Some activities are permitted "as-of-right" and others may require only an administrative permit from the Chester Wetland Agent. The town wetland map provides a very general location of wetlands and watercourses, but does not depict all wetlands and should be used only as a guide. The Chester IWWA regulations and permit application are available online from the Town's website. Anyone considering activities on their property should contact the Chester Wetland Agent to determine if a permit is required.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Sandy Prisloe, Chairman

The Conservation Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The commission is required to develop and maintain an inventory of all Chester properties permanently protected as open space; the commission also may inventory and study the town's natural resources and make recommendations concerning their conservation and best uses to other town boards, commission and officials.

The commission continued to focus on energy conservation and recommended to the Board of Selectmen that the town adopt a Comprehensive Energy Plan. To this end the commission recommended that an energy task force, headed by the Conservation Commission, be established and charged with drafting Chester's Comprehensive Energy Plan. This work will continue in the coming year. The commission also worked with the Selectmen on the Cedar Lake Advisory Board and helped with the weed harvesting plan.

PUBLIC SAFETY

CHESTER HOSE COMPANY

Charles F. Greeney, Jr. Chief

For the fiscal year 2010-2011 the Chester Hose Company, Inc. responded to the following calls:

Fires	29
Explosion or overheat (no fire)	01
Rescue & Medical Incident	587
Includes:	EMS Calls, Aircraft Crash, MVA's with & without injuries, Watercraft rescues
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	19
Includes:	Combustible Gas/Liquid Condition, Odor of Gas (Natural or LPG), C.O. Incident, Power Lines Down
Service Call	13
Includes:	Person in Distress, Smoke or Odor Removal, Public Service Assistance, Unauthorized Burning
Good Intent Call	12
False Alarm & False Call	12
Severe Weather or Natural Disaster	01
Special Incident Type	01

For a total of 709 Calls

Throughout the past year we have worked on our addition. We have the outside finished. Thanks to a lot of help from members and outside contractors. At this time I would like to thank all that put in tireless hours on the building to get it where it is today. We have a long way to go. We need to get the inside wired, insulated and the heat hooked up.

We got a donation of a deuce and half truck that we are working on to better protect the wooded area of our town. This truck will carry 750 gallons of water, hose and brush fire equipment. At this time it has cost the town no money. Everything has been donated. To all that have donated the truck and equipment, thank you. This will be a great addition to our fleet. Please remember to put your house number so it is visible from the street. This will allow us to find you in your time of need.

On behalf of the Chester Hose Company I wish to say simply and sincerely, thank you! We will continue to stand by, proud and committed with highly trained personnel willing to help you in your time of need. If you would like to join a great group of men and women, please stop by any Monday night from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. pick up an application, stay and observe as we train and form an opinion on applying for membership.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Robert Jenkins, Animal Control Officer

Redeemed	19
D.O.A.	1 (Raccoon)
Complaints	146
Summons	1
Sold as Pets	2
Euthanized	0
Bites	3
Impound Fees	\$350.00
Adoption Fees	\$100.00

It's nice to see that people are redeeming their pets quickly and are more aware of what their pets are doing. As you can see, complaints are down from last year. I was certainly glad that I didn't have to euthanize any animals this year.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Joel Severance, Chairman

The commissioners continue evaluating applications for work waterward of the high tide line. This is the defined boundary of our responsibility. Now that we have completed funding the rewrite of our updated **Harbor Management Plan**, we have returned to our annual water quality testing. Ten years ago we started a testing plan by establishing a baseline from which to evaluate future results. Our marinas (4) and yacht clubs (3) continue upgrading their facilities. Chester Point (formerly Chester) Marina completed the dredging and new dock installations for half the facility; the remainder to be done in 2012. Pataconk and Middlesex Yacht Clubs completed their dredging and dock work as approved the year before by this Commission.

FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

Richard "Dick" E. Leighton, Fire Marshal

David Roberge, Fire Investigator

As you can readily determine, by the response from the Fire Commission, the Fire Marshal's Office is being covered by both David Roberge and the undersigned. This coverage will continue until the selected Candidate Michael Whaples, has completed the required administrative training and has sufficient experience to serve the Town of Chester. In the interim, we have taken on the responsibilities of the Office to insure the various occupancies which require licensing by the State of Connecticut receive the required annual inspections and approvals on a timely basis. This Office has is concentrating on the occupancies including education, daycare, assemblies, and life care facilities, to insure compliance with the established Codes adopted by the State of Connecticut. This Office is readily available to answer questions or follow-up on problems which commercial occupancies have or assist the residents with problems which may fall within our realm of responsibilities. Burning Permits for the residents will still be available through this Office, for weekends, only. Since taking over the responsibilities on 4/15/2011, this Office has re-inspected 15 establishments relative to State Licensing requirements, issued 2 blasting permits, 4 burning permits, and also investigated 1 fire. As you can readily determine the majority of the responsibilities of this Office are in other areas than simply fire investigations.

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Joel Severance, Chairman

Bernard (Bernie) Negrelli, our long serving fire marshal retired this year. The Board studied the state requirements and began a search for a replacement. Of the candidates for the position, we came up with a plan for interim coverage while a local volunteer fireman took the training. Training to become certified as a fire marshal is lengthy and comprehensive and takes over a year. We were fortunate that two veteran, area fire marshals were available to help us thru the transition period. Richard (Dick) Leighton was hired with the responsibility for permits, inspections and day to day requests for services from the office. Dave Roberge was hired as our Fire Investigator. Mike Whaples is in training and will become our fire marshal.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Joel Severance, Director

Snowmagedden 2011: The year began as one of challenges. Between December 27th and February 2nd we had 53 inches of snow. Most of the state was declared a disaster making eligible municipalities eligible for Federal (FEMA) financial assistance. First Selectman Tom Marsh signed a Declaration of a Snow Emergency, a requirement for FEMA assistance. *Demise of the Community Center January 12:* In spite of efforts by the Town Public Works crew to clear accumulating snow off the Community Center the roof failed. The Building Inspector declared the structure unsafe and a decision was made to raze it. The building was constructed in the 1920s for use as a firehouse, and housed the Chester Volunteer Fire Department until the early 1970s. It has been used as a community center ever since, and housed the offices for the town's resident state trooper and police constables until the current town office building on Route 154 opened in 2003. The building is also used by the Town's Park and Recreation Department, particularly on rainy days in the summer, and various community organizations, such as the Chester Fife and Drum Corps and the local Girl Scout troop.

Residents of Chester are reminded to "opt in" to the CtAlert emergency notification system. In the case of a townwide or local emergency...or missing person... you will be called on your home phone, business line, cell phone pager or by e-mail. To sign up: ctalert.gov/ctalert/site/default.asp

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REGION 4 HIGH SCHOOL for Chester, Deep River, Essex

Ruth I Levy, Ed.D., Superintendent

The 2010-2011 school year was a productive year filled with accomplishments for the Essex, Chester, Deep River, and Region 4 Schools.

Throughout our districts, the focus on teaching and learning permeated all aspects of curriculum, instruction, and budget preparation in order to meet the changing needs of our students. New core national and state standards were infused into our curriculum. Technology is key to building 21st Century skills necessary for careers of the future. We actively use technology in our instructional programs, and to assist educators in analyzing assessment data for better instructional decisions.

Our schools place a high priority on positive social development from kindergarten through grade twelve, supporting a positive learning climate, confidence, and self esteem. Each of our schools presented programs for students and parents on bullying and respect during the 2010-2011 school year. The collaborative efforts between the schools, towns, and Tri-Town Youth Services are evidenced in the awards and recognition that our students have received whether in academics, athletics, or the arts.

Accomplishments for the 2010-2011 school year were plentiful across all areas. Environmentally green efforts were made by each of our schools through recycling, composting, and conservation initiatives. Recognition and awards were received in such areas as the Mock Trial Team, Lego Team competitions, Music and Art competitions both in New England and on a National level. Valley Regional High School was named as one of the top 500 high schools across our country by Newsweek Magazine. New England League of Middle Schools named John Winthrop Middle School as a Spotlight School. Our musical, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang was a great performance with sellout crowds each day. Our students were outstanding in football, track, gymnastics, and State Champions in our class in Basketball.

We look forward to providing rigor, focus, and accountability across all curricular areas during the 2011-2012 school year. The combined efforts and positive communication between the schools, home, and our communities will move our schools toward excellence for each and every child.

CHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Michael K. Barile, Principal

MISSION

We, the schools of Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4, engage all students in a rigorous, challenging, and cohesive educational program. As a community of learners, we foster individual student achievement and empower students to excel in an environment of collaboration, responsibility, and mutual respect. We prepare our students to be knowledgeable, involved citizens in a rapidly changing world.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 2010–2011 school year brought many accomplishments to Chester Elementary School. One highlight is the positive results that were achieved on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). Many factors helped influence the increased CMT scores, including how we as a school set goals and periodically gauge our progress with internal assessments. This year, we continued focusing on our school improvement initiative. At the beginning of the school year, we established two academic goals around the areas of reading and mathematics. The School Improvement Committee established these goals after a thorough review of school-wide and state achievement data. Each of the goals targeted specific areas of instruction requiring additional emphasis. Grade-level teams then developed specific objectives, including instructional strategies, to best meet each goal. In reading, emphasis was placed on improving comprehension for all students, with a specific focus on their ability to clearly articulate and justify answers, in writing, to open-ended questions that required them to make reader/text connections. In math, our goal was to improve students' ability to think and communicate mathematically with a specific focus on estimation. In addition, we continued our prior year's goal which includes improving students' proficiency, accuracy and speed with math facts.

At Chester Elementary School we strive to foster a “learning and caring” community and set high expectations for all students. The staff continues to be committed to meeting the needs of the various learners. Our goal is to improve student learning by enhancing our instruction so that we can better deliver quality instruction based on individual needs.

In addition to our academic program in reading, writing and mathematics, we offer additional programs that enrich our students’ education experience. Each grade level includes special subjects, such as Spanish, Art, Music, and Physical Education. In addition, students utilize and receive instruction in technology throughout the day across the curriculum. We also offer students in the upper grades additional enrichment opportunities, which include a Talented and Gifted program in grade 6, as well as choral program beginning in grade 3 and a band program in grade 4. Students also have the opportunity for extra-curricular programs facilitated by our staff which include Jazz Band, Spanish Dance, Math Olympiad and Project Adventure. Additionally, after-school activities called “Creative Extensions” are offered to all students, through our very supportive Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). The PTO provides additional enrichment programs for students in the Arts throughout the year, as well as opportunities for parent/family involvement.

Other important successes during the 2010-2011 school year include the following:

- A fifth grade student was the first place winner of the 2011 Middlesex County Arbor Day Essay Contest and was recognized in Hartford on the front lawn of the Capital building. This is the second consecutive year that a Chester Elementary student has won first place for Middlesex County.
- Several students were selected from our school Invention Convention to attend Connecticut’s Annual Invention Convention at UCONN. At the state Convention, Chester students won special awards.
- We continued to promote a positive school culture that embraced the “whole child,” by supporting students’ academic and emotional development through our Social Development Program.
- Staff members worked on and valued the research-based model known as “professional learning communities.” This collaborative approach where grade level teams meet weekly to plan lessons, develop assessments, discuss instructional strategies and monitor student achievement is part of our school improvement process.
- Students in all grades took engaging and enriching field trips that made their learning more authentic.
- Our school participated in a Book-of-the Month program that promoted a specific social message with accompanying activities for each grade level. This allowed all students in the school to share a positive theme for each month of the school year.
- We improved our existing “Recycling” program by fostering awareness through education and establishing more collection points throughout the school.
- We participated in Region 4’s Civics Bee this year. The Civics Bee began at Chester Elementary two years ago in conjunction with the Chester Bar Association.
- A healthy school garden was created by a group of parents and students.
- Students, staff and parents supported our service learning projects which included fundraising for Haiti as well as the donation of non-perishable food items to Chester’s Food Pantry.

FUTURE DIRECTION

It is important that we continue the successes noted above. The goal and focus will be to continue working together and committing to actions that will better prepare our students for success in the 21st century. Some of these actions will include the following:

- Encourage a positive school culture that supports high academic and behavioral expectations.
- Foster collaboration through the use of a professional learning community model as a process for school improvement.
- Embrace accountability and learning standards based upon the Connecticut Mastery Test, along with rigorous grade-level expectations and other indicators of success.
- Strive for educational excellence.

PUBLIC WORKS

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

John Divis, Foreman

The Public Works Department is staffed by two full time maintenance employees and the Foreman. The First Selectman is the Director of Public Works in title only. Outside contractors are utilized throughout the year to supplement our limited staff. Even though staff is limited the list of functions handled by Public Works is extensive. Public Works is perhaps the most visible service to the majority of Chester residents. Department functions include:

- minor road repairs
- building maintenance
 - Community Center, Meeting House, Public Library, Public Works Department, Town Hall, Visitor's Center
- vehicles and equipment maintenance
- monthly brush pick up
- mowing and trimming of town properties and parks
- park maintenance requests
- catch basin cleaning in spring and fall
- leaf removal from town properties
- winter road maintenance
- roadside tree trimming

DEEP RIVER TRANSFER STATION BULKY WASTE AND RECYCLING INFORMATION

Chester residents may dispose of certain materials at the Deep River Transfer Station on Route 80 in Deep River, subject to the following regulations:

No household garbage will be accepted. By Town Ordinance residents are required to have a private hauler. Private haulers will also pick up recyclables. Any violation of this provision shall immediately terminate privileges afforded by the permit.

Recyclables: By Town Ordinance residents are required to have a private hauler. Any violation of this provision shall immediately terminate privileges afforded by the permit.

Permit Required: Chester residents must display a "Town of Chester Access To Public Services" permit on the windshield of their vehicle to gain access to these facilities. These stickers must be placed on the passenger side of the front windshield and may be obtained at the Selectman's Office with proof of residence and vehicle license plate number.

Hours of Operation: Deep River Transfer Station

Wednesday & Friday	8:00 AM through 4:00 PM
Saturday & Sunday	8:00 AM through 4:00 PM

Regulations:

- 1) All users shall separate loads and place in proper containers under direction of attendant(s), who will be on duty during regularly scheduled hours.
- 2) Attendant(s) has the right to refuse entry to anyone not having proper identification or whose load does not comply with these regulations.
- 3) As provided in current Chester bulky waste regulations, the Town of Deep River will accept only household bulky waste under this contract; waste originating from business or commercial sources or from households under construction, demolition or landscaping contracts will not be accepted.
- 4) Residents may use passenger cars, small trailers and pick-up trucks, each of which must display the required permit.
- 5) All items and material must be transported in containers.
- 6) No hazardous materials, paper goods or commercial waste will be permitted.
- 7) Do not combine materials in containers meant for specific items.

ESTUARY REGION HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE FACILITY

The Estuary Region Household Hazardous Waste Facility opened on selected Saturdays between May through October. The Estuary Region HHW facility will be closed November-April. The facility is located off Route 9, exit 4. Go straight off exit ramp, cross over RR tracks, and pass CRRA Transfer Station and the HHW facility is on the left. For more information contact 860-388-3497.

Acceptable Materials:

Household:

- Drain cleaners
- Metal polish
- Oven cleaners
- Floor cleaners
- Mothballs
- Photo chemicals
- Full/partially-full aerosols
- Arts & crafts supplies
- Household batteries
- Asbestos-containing floor tiles
- Water-reactive materials (such as peroxides and metallic sodium)
- Mercury Thermometers (A free digital thermometer will be given in exchange.)

Garage:

- Fire starters including hand-held propane torch cylinders
- Old chemistry kits
- Transmission fluid, gasoline, kerosene
- Waxes and polishes
- Brake fluid
- Rust preventatives

Workshop:

- Rust preventatives
- Wood preservatives
- Wood strippers
- Oil-based paint
- Lead-based paint
- Paint thinner and degreasers
- Solvents and Sealants

Yard/Garden:

- Weed killer
- Insect sprays
- Rodent poison
- Muriatic acid/pool chemicals
- Cesspool cleaners

Unacceptable Materials:

- Latex paint (This can be air-dried or dried with sawdust or kitty litter and disposed in the garbage.)
- Explosives, fireworks, ammunition
- BBQ Propane tanks
- Fire extinguishers (Your fire department may accept these.)
- Empty aerosol cans
- Radioactive material
- Medications
- Infectious or biologically active materials
- Dioxin and unknown materials
- Waste Oil
- Vehicle Batteries
- Any commercial hazardous waste

TREE WARDEN

Scot Mills

As new tree warden for the Town of Chester my first goal was to further my education in tree biology, insects, diseases, the decay of trees, and tree law to properly maintain and care for town trees. My second goal was to become a certified tree warden to have a clear understanding of policies, procedures, and state statutes surrounding the care and maintenance of town trees. My third goal was to look back at past practices of Tree Wardens in town to see how they were managing trees in our public right of ways and town properties.

To date I have completed an Arboriculture 101 course and will further my education with an advanced arboriculture course in January. I have attended two tree and tree law workshops over the past year and have spent many hours studying tree law. I have just completed my tree warden certificate course and will become a certified tree warden as of January 1, 2012.

After looking at past practices of Tree Wardens in our town I have found that there is not a consistent management plan to deal with a growing population of older and declining trees or any type of replanting program. The program that is in place now is one of reactive and not proactive, meaning that we are reacting to the individual trees that are called in by a concerned citizen rather than being proactive and looking at all are trees to identify risks before they become hazards.

The following are my goals as tree warden for the next year:

- Start an aggressive proactive forestry management program that will include an inventory of town trees so we can start to identify risk trees.
- Start an evaluation process of our risk trees which will allow me to grade a tree based on failure potential and public risk. Once the initial evaluation is complete it will allow me to revisit those trees annually to see if a particular tree is in decline and what new risk it may pose to the public.
- Work more closely with CL&P before during and after storms so that damage is assessed and repairs are prompt.
- Put together a Community Forestry Program to help with tree inventories and replanting trees in our town.
- Further my education on tree risk assessment and tree law as well as obtain my arborist license.

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Albert A. Armington, Chairman

Thanks to the cooperation of all local restaurants, the Chester WPCA accomplished early compliance with the DEEP's mandate to install Automatic Grease Recovery Units in all Food Service Establishments. With proper maintenance of these units, we should see fewer instances of grease build up in the sewer system, resulting in lowered repair and cleaning costs. It is important that everyone connected to the sewer system be aware that this is a small system, and hence small infusions of inappropriate materials can cause major problems. We continue to address issues related to infiltration into the system from runoff and unauthorized connections, which also contribute to elevated costs.

By the time this report appears, we should have completed the construction of an access catwalk for the pump station, providing safe access to the generator for service and fueling. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the significant contributions of both John King and Edward Ward to the WPCA's guidance and operation from the earliest days. Ed has retired as chairman after eight years, and John has been a diligent and invaluable member of the commission since WPCA's beginning. Both of them have contributed untiring service to the Town of Chester.

CHESTER CEMETERY ASSOCIATION, INC.

Robert P. Klomp, President

The Chester Cemetery Association looks after the general maintenance of the town's cemeteries at Cedar Lake, Laurel Hill and the two old cemeteries on Cemetery Hill near the Town Green. The headstones and markers at Cedar Lake (west) Cemetery and the upper and lower cemeteries on Goose Hill are to be inventoried thanks to a project of young workers under the guidance of the Chester Historical Society and the funding by a state grant. There is a map in the Town Clerk's Office which shows all the lots in the Laurel Hill Cemetery.

Our cemeteries are open sun up to sun down and visitors are welcome to enjoy the settings. Each cemetery has a trustee who inspects it. The mowing is contracted under the direction of Vice President Alan Cuneo. The Treasurer is Robert Deroo. We do not have any full plots in our inventory; however, there are cremation plots at Laurel Hill currently priced at \$250. As always, we welcome new members and volunteers.

RECREATIONAL / CULTURAL / HISTORICAL

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Elizabeth A. Netsch, Director

Members of the Chester Park and Recreation Commission seek to promote healthy lifestyles through recreation, by providing parks and programs that meet the needs of all town residents, while maintaining a fiscally responsible operation. Most of the budget net expenditures are for park maintenance, while programs are self-funded. In addition, contributions from groups and individuals in the community have helped finance various activities.

The Commission is responsible for the maintenance and renovation of 7 facilities in Chester. They are North Quarter Park, the Chester Creek Overlook at the Town dock, Pelletier Park on Cedar Lake, the beach on Cedar Lake Road, Parkers Point boat launch on the Connecticut River, L'hommeideau Park on the Pattaconk Brook, and the baseball fields at Chester Elementary School. The Community Center was lost this winter due to the roof collapse following one of the snow storms, so several programs were relocated to the Town Hall and Chester Elementary School. This year a deck was constructed at the Cedar Lake concession as Max Hotkowski's Eagle Scout Project.

Income to the Town's General Fund, from the sale of non-resident park passes for fiscal year 2010/2011 was \$8,202, exceeding the budgeted amount by due to a warm summer. Fees collected for the Children's Summer Program, swimming lessons, cancellation fees and miscellaneous program registration fees contributed \$14,145 to the General Fund. Donations from the Chester Rotary Club, the staff members and PTO of Chester Elementary School, and local citizens provided camp scholarships and donations of park services and materials were provided by Diver's Cove and Windham Materials.

Self-funded programs included 151 participants in the Children's Summer Program Camp, 15 adult and 76 youth basketball players, 35 people attending a trip to New York City, and over 40 students in American Red Cross courses including Community CPR/AED, First Aid, Babysitter's Training, and CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer. There were 50 enrollments in swimming lessons and 26 students in the American Red Cross GuardStart program. The department ran programs for 78 children during half days off of school throughout the academic year, including a bowling field trip, Mad Science, and a Magic Workshop. After school programs included Dance, Lacrosse, Karate, All About Dogs, Roller Rink and Theatre Workshops with 104 participants. Over 175 people attended our "March Madness" basketball event, but the Beach party in June had very light attendance.

The purpose of the activities and facilities operated by the Chester Park and Recreation Commission is to improve the quality of life for all citizens. We are fortunate to have the resources of several beautiful park facilities and over 50 exceptional employees and volunteers.

CHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Linda Fox, Library Director

Summer is a lively time at Chester Library, charged with energy and enthusiasm for reading, crafts and exploration. This summer children explored creative writing, learned to knit, knotted macramé, discovered decoupage and delighted in the secret world of bubbles, while teens undertook book discussions. With the end of summer came the debut of a redesigned library webpage that provides access to the library catalog, online registration for programs, and regularly updated information about library services and programs. The page received well over 6000 hits in its first year. In December, at the request of the Library Board of Trustees, the Selectmen established a Library Building Expansion Committee and charged it with determining the feasibility of making the existing building accessible to all and with assessing the possibilities for expansion. As of late June 2011, the Town was poised to issue an RFP for architectural services for this study. March brought access to downloadable audio and eBooks to Chester patrons and, in April, four local poets read from their work in celebration of National Poetry Month. Throughout the year, knitters gathered to stitch, children gathered for stories and crafts, adults gathered to discuss literature and volunteers presented programs on topics as diverse as costume jewelry and travel in Afghanistan. As summer came around again, the library announced that users of Apple technology now have a free app for VERSO, the library's circulation system.

Chester Library continues to be an active community resource. During the course of the year, library staff welcomed 235 new patrons and checked out 34,795 items. The Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and Connecticard Programs, which support cooperation between libraries, are essential to Chester Library. Between March 2010 and February 2011, people from 35 other towns in Connecticut used their Connecticard privileges to check out 3,127 items in Chester. During the same period, Chester Library card holders checked out 20,594 items at 73 other libraries across the state. Via ILL, Chester

loaned 662 items to other libraries and borrowed a total of 1582 items from other libraries on behalf of Chester patrons. Library staff responded to 2299 reference questions, while the library's single public computer was used 809 times. The work of many makes all of this possible. The Friends of Chester Library are essential partners whose fundraising provides resources to support library programs, to purchase movies and other items not included in the town budget. Friends' Chair, Tracy Quale was assisted by Kathy Marsh, Treasurer; Doreen Bickford, Secretary, Mary Harrall, Membership; and Diane Lindsay, Book Sales. The Library Board of Trustees oversees library policies and programs and tends to the long term viability of Chester Library. Trustees this year were Terry Schreiber, Chair; Sandy Senior-Dauer, Vice Chair; Molly Lund, Secretary; Deedee Prisloe, Treasurer; Peggy Carter Ward and Barbara Standke. A host of volunteers contributed their time, organizing book sales, helping weekly in the library, baking for events and so much more. Chester Library is fortunate to be supported by this excellent, dedicated group of volunteers.

CHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Skip Hubbard, President

It was just a little bit more than a year ago, May 1, 2010, that Chester Museum at The Mill opened its doors, beginning a new chapter for the Society. We welcomed more than 500 people in the following six months, generating enthusiastic comments from visitors, whether Chester-ites, area residents, or travelers from afar.

While we all took pride when we opened Chester Museum at The Mill with its permanent exhibit *Streams of Change: Life and Industry along the Pattaconk*, we hardly anticipated the additional recognition that followed from two respected history organizations.

In February we were notified that Chester is one of two Connecticut societies to receive the 2011 Award of Merit for Exhibits from the Connecticut League of History Organizations. In mid-May, the Society received a phone call that we are in a select group to be honored with a national Award of Merit in September when the American Association for State and Local History holds its annual conference in Richmond, VA.

Both organizations cited Chester's accomplishments as a fine example of all-volunteer community excellence.

Museum visitor experiences translated into Society benefits in at least three areas. We certainly saw a nice growth in new memberships, the backbone of any similar organization. In addition, our Annual Appeal generated record numbers, both in participation and in total donations.

We also were quite busy responding to inquiries regarding donations to the Society's collection. It seems once people saw the exhibitions and, especially, our two secure archival vaults, local attics and closets began opening up.

When the museum season neared its October 30 close, the Society's public programs took center stage. September brought a focus on Connecticut Barns as we combined an art show at The Mill with a barn-raising on the Green and slide presentation at the Meetinghouse. A family-fun presentation of "It Happened to Jane" was shown at the Meetinghouse in February, complete with refreshments from the period of the 1958 filming in Chester.

In April we hosted the Chester Elementary School third grade for a full day, taking them back in time to experience school as it was when Chester had four school districts.

Continuing with the host theme, the Society's second Historical Hospitality dinners were a big hit again as eight Chester homes opened their doors for an evening of delicious dining following a reception at Maple & Main Gallery.

Financially, we had to struggle a bit this year. The addition of museum admissions and the increase in the Annual Appeal donations were more than offset by unanticipated major heating repairs, a severe winter, and a few less people at our major fundraiser. While other expenses were modest and "on-budget," we were reminded of the need for continued annual financial support from our membership.

On the horizon, the 2011 museum season opened in June with a fresh new exhibit in our first-floor Watrous Room. *Chester Voices from the Civil War*, our 2011 seasonal exhibit, focused on Chester residents, both at war and on the home front.

Lastly, a hearty "Thank You" goes out to our membership, friends of the Society and the entire Chester community. Your combined support has brought the Chester Historical Society and Chester Museum at The Mill to this point in creating its own history.

CHESTER WAR MEMORIAL

Years ago, a group of veterans had a vision to expand upon the existing war memorial to honor the service men and women of Chester who served in the military. Through their efforts and the generous support of local residents and businesses, their dreams have been realized and the Bronze Eagle has been installed and the lighting has been updated.

Jerry LaMark, Commandant of the local American Legion, would like to give special thanks to Carlson Landscaping for their wonderful job removing leaves and cleaning the memorial area, Bob Sumner for providing year round maintenance and placing 500 flags on the graves for Veterans Day, Art Christianson for all of his assistance, the Chester Garden Club for placing flowers at the memorial, Shelley Brothers Monuments for donating their time and expertise mounting the bronze eagle, and the multitude of volunteers who donated a variety of services and time. Wikipedia defines a war memorial as a building, monument, statue or other edifice to celebrate a war or victory, or (predominating in modern times) to commemorate those who died or were injured in war. The Chester War Memorial is indeed these things, but it also is a place where one can take time out to quietly sit and reflect upon the sacrifice that military men and women make and about the freedoms that they set out to protect.

The memorial is funded by private donations from individuals, companies, and corporations. We would like to especially thank James and Martha Beaudoin who have made a monthly donation for many years now no matter how difficult the economy has been. The committee would like to thank everyone for their support and thank Chester's military heroes for their patriotism, valor and commitment to defending freedom.

AUDIT

A copy of the Town of Chester Financial Statements, Internal Control Reports and Compliance Reports for the Year Ending June 30, 2011 can be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office or on the following link:

<http://www.chesterct.org/depart/finance/Audit%20FY%2011.pdf>

TOWN PROFILE

The 2011 Town of Chester's Profile, provided by CERC, is available on the following link:

<http://www.cerc.com/TownProfiles/Custom-Images/chester.pdf>