

Westbrook



Events

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Volume 11 · Quarter 2 · 2011



Selectman's Corner
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Planning Commission
Bench Donation Program
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Selectman's Corner

Westbrook has begun a comprehensive property revaluation as required by CT State Statute. The following interview was conducted with Mr. Steve Ferreira, ASA, District Manager of Vision Appraisal and Ms. Pam Fogarty, Westbrook Assessor. The interview addresses the major issues and concerns of Westbrook property owners.

What is a property revaluation and why is it being done in Westbrook now? A property revaluation is a state mandated, "snap-shot" of a property value at any given time. The time-frame established by the statute for Westbrook is 10/1/11.

Why was Vision Appraisal selected to perform the revaluations? Vision Appraisal is the largest mass revaluation company in New England. They have extensive experience in Connecticut, Southern New England and shoreline properties in particular.

What is the revaluation timeline? The initial phase of the revaluation is the data collection phase. This phase entails visiting each property. These property visits began in April and will go through early summer. The revaluation information will not be made public until November 2011.

How will a property owner know when a Vision Appraisal representative will visit their property? The process started in the northwest portion of Westbrook and is progressing south. The shoreline properties will be

done in the summer months. All Vision Appraisal employees have photo identification, a letter from the Assessor and are registered with the police. If a resident has any questions, they should call Pam Fogarty, Westbrook Assessor (860) 399-3016 or (860) 399-3045. The visit is for data collection only and should take approximately 15 to 30 minutes.



First Selectman Noel Bishop

How will property owners receive the results of their revaluation? In November, each property owner will receive a notice in the mail. This notice will include web site information and an 800 telephone number. After November, please use the 800 number for any questions. This web site will allow property owners access to their information as well as information for properties throughout Westbrook.

What is the appeal process? After notice is received, a property owner has 2 weeks to set up a hearing with Vision Appraisal. This hearing will be an informal discussion. After this discussion, the appraisers will review the information to determine if changes are necessary. A second notice will go out to all property owners who

continued on page 2

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Essex Bank Executive Named to New Advisory Board

Gregory Shook, president and CEO of Essex Savings Bank, was recently appointed by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston to a 12 member Advisory Council formed in response to new regulations.

Each Federal Reserve Bank across the country is establishing a First District Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council (CDIAC) in response to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010. The councils will represent the perspective of smaller financial institutions and provide input on the economy and lending conditions, among other issues, according to a statement. The First District's 12 CDIAC members represent commercial banks, thrift institutions and credit unions with assets less than \$10 billion. Members, which are from each of the six New England states, will meet three times annually.



• *Selectman's Corner continued from page 1* •



Vision Appraisal employees will be conducting property revaluations for the town of Westbrook.

requested a review advising them of the results of that review. This second notice will also outline the next steps available to the property owner.

What is the role of the Board of Assessment Appeals? The Board of Assessment Appeals meets after the Grand List is signed in February 2012. If a property owner has concerns, they can schedule a hearing with the Board of Assessment Appeals.

Is it necessary to schedule Public Meetings regarding the revaluation? Vision Appraisal is open to meet with the public. Such a meeting will be scheduled in early October 2011 and will address any concerns regarding the appraisals.

What if Vision Appraisal is refused entry? While property owners have the right to refuse entry, it is important to allow Vision Appraisal access that will insure the most accurate information is obtained.

What are the specific criteria for revaluation? The revaluation is based on the market value obtained from legitimate sales in Westbrook between 10/1/10 and 10/1/11.

Summarize the most important message to the public? The most important message is that the project is in the data collection phase at this time. It is in the best interest of the property owner to allow Vision Appraisal representatives access to their property for the inspection.

Information is available on the Assessor's Page of the Westbrook website at www.westbrookct.us.



This June the Elks Club will be sponsoring the Wounded Warriors Program, honoring all those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. These events will take place June 20th-25th.

For town updates & information:
www.westbrookct.us



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— Jim Dauda, Transfer Station Operator

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From the Assessor's Office

The Town of Westbrook, CT has hired Vision Appraisal Technology to complete its state-mandated revaluation program. The reassessment project will establish market value as of October 1, 2011 and will be reflected in the tax bills issued in the summer of 2012. The project will commence this April at the northwestern end of town with data collectors visiting all buildings to record exterior measurements and conduct interior inspections. Data collectors will carry letters of identification from the Assessor's Office and a photo ID badge and have their cars registered with the Police Department. All

property owners and tenants are respectfully requested to cooperate with data collectors to insure that accurate information is used in the revaluation process.

Currently the data collectors are finishing the Northwest corner of Town, and are moving on to the Northeast corner. The new area of data collection is centred around Toby Hill Rd and RT 153. Any property owners who have questions concerning the revaluation process can contact the Assessor's Office during working hours at 860-399-3016 or 860-399-3045.

Bench Donation Program

If you haven't noticed, there are three new benches gracing the Town Green along Westbrook Place that were donated last year through the bench donation program. There are still spots available around the green for additional benches. The attractive, environmentally friendly benches with bronze plaques are a fitting and lasting tribute to loved ones, people who have made a special contribution to the community, or in commemoration of a special event.

If you are interested in donating a bench, you can pick up a brochure at Town Hall or the library. You can also download a copy from the town website @ www.westbrookct.us. The brochure includes information on the benches, the order form, and detailed instructions for placing the order.



If this program is successful, it will be extended beyond the Town Green and will include other street furniture such as trash receptacles and bicycle racks.

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Planning Commission Rolls Out Draft Plan of Conservation and Development

After nearly two-and-a-half years of meetings and public workshops, the steering committee, working with planning consultant Planimetrics, has forwarded a draft Plan of Conservation and Development to the Planning Commission for review and adoption. The Planning Commission will complete its review in early May and present the final draft of the plan at a public information meeting scheduled for May 23 in the Community Room at the library at 7:00 p.m. Copies of the plan are available for review on the town website, at the Land Use Office, and at the library. The plan sets the course for the next ten years and will guide town decisions related to land-use policies and capital improvements. A public hearing for adoption of the plan has been tentatively scheduled for June 27, 2011.

The plan reflects a commitment to the concept of being a sustainable and resilient community and is organized around three main themes: A Healthy Environment; A Vibrant Community; and A Strong Economy. The guiding principles, based on input from residents and discussion among the participants in the planning process, were to:

- Strive to maintain small-town feel;
- Guide growth to areas where it is most appropriate;
- Develop well-planned green space that increases property values and decreases the costs of public infrastructure and service;
- Protect natural resources because they are an integral component of community character and well-being;
- Value Long Island Sound as a community asset of state-wide and national significance; and
- Embrace the Town Center as the heart of the community, a social gathering spot that is a visual representation of community pride and New England heritage.

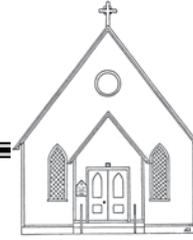
As development of the plan reaches its final stages, residents are once again encouraged to make their thoughts known and continue to "Be a Part of the Plan"!

From the Nurse's Corner



Janis Reep, registered nurse.

We're sure by now many of you have met our newest employee, Janis Reep, either through homecare, blood pressure clinics, or when visiting the senior center in the Town Hall. Janis is a registered nurse who brings to our agency a combination of administrative and rehab nursing skills from her various career experiences. She looks forward to using her knowledge and skills when working with our clients.



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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Kenneth Miller, Organist
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David Cahill, Sr. Warden
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A Message from the Open Burning Official

Spring is upon us once again and the urge to burn runs through our minds.

The burning of brush is permitted if certain criteria are met. If you have a pile of brush that you would like to burn, contact the "Open Burning Official" at 860-399-3040 and I will meet with you to see if it is safe to burn in your location.

Bonfires and campfires are permitted for "ceremonial" purposes only. They should be contained in a stone, concrete block or sunken area away from any dwellings or wooded area. The fire department has been called out to several bonfires that were started with an accelerant and caused flames to reach ten to fifteen feet into the air. This is a dangerous and illegal method of starting a fire, and someone could be injured

in the process. Please note that building materials are not allowed in the use of bonfires. Some paper and dry kindling should work well if you plan ahead for your fire.

NO BURNING OF ANY KIND IS ALLOWED DURING "HIGH, VERY HIGH, or EXTREME BURNING INDEX."

You can go on the Department of Environmental Protection's web site to check "forest fire danger": <http://www.ct.gov/dep/site/default.asp>.

You may call the Open Burning Official for advice and to let him know that you will be having a bonfire at your location. Have a safe spring!!

— Loren E. Baker, Jr., Open Burning Official

Westbrook Garden Club

The Westbrook Garden Club was established over fifty years ago to help beautify our lovely town. Over the years the club has grown and participates in community projects as well as sponsoring programs to educate the public. The garden club has provided programs to the public on a variety of garden topics. The club is always looking for garden enthusiasts – men and women of all ages to participate in a

wide range of activities to help support the Westbrook Garden Club's objectives.

The Westbrook Garden Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Westbrook Public Library. All are invited to come and enjoy the club's free presentations.

"Pruning for the Faint of Heart," will be presented on May 24 by Carl Galanter of Broken Arrow Nursery.

Keith Lyke, R.Ph. Steve Vegliante, R.Ph.



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Westbrook Recreation Department

Spring / Summer Update!

Spring has finally gotten here, and we hope that everyone has registered for all our spring programs. Recreational soccer is off and running at Wren Park, with boys and girls of all ages. Our T-Ball for Tots program is in full swing at the Daisy baseball fields. This program is for all 3- to 5-year-old boys and girls who wish to learn how to play baseball. Classes are on Saturday mornings from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. Please remember that we can pro-rate both these programs for children who start late.

It's time to register for all our many summer camps. We have Sports, Theatre, Little Folks, Summer Day, and Teen Camps for boys and girls everywhere. Due to the great demand from our residents and surrounding towns, we have provided camps for children of all ages. Any boy or girl between the ages of 4 and 15 years old is welcome to register for any of these camps. Day camps provide children with wonderful opportunities to make new friends, grow socially, discover nature, and share amazing experiences.

Little Folks Camp will run Monday – Friday and be held at the Teresa Mulvey Center from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. Summer Day Camp will be back at Daisy Elementary School and Wren Park. The Teen Camp will be at Westbrook Middle School, where children can enjoy the tennis courts, track, soccer fields, and everything else available there. The difference



Westbrook Family Day

between Summer Day Camp and the Teen Camp is that the Teen Camp is more advanced and has age-appropriate activities. This summer we have planned hiking, tennis, badminton, floor hockey, soccer, dodgeball, baseball, and a number of other exciting activities. Due to limited space, we will only have 45 teens registered for each week. Teen Camp will follow the same schedule as Summer Day Camp and run for eight

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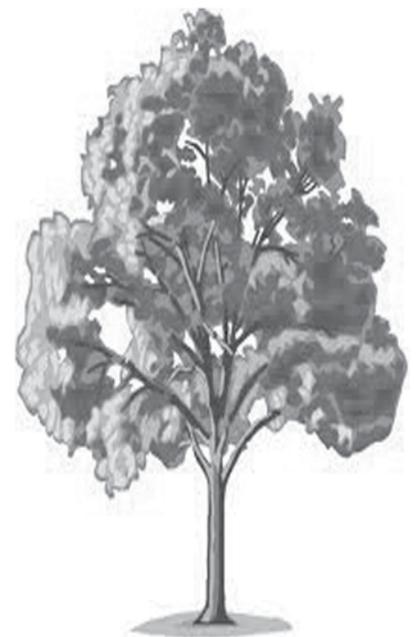
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Leading with Assets

Ten students from the Youth Asset Team (YAT) attended a leadership workshop along with advisor Lyn Connery and Health Teacher Allison Sumecki.

The event took place at Middlesex Community College. It was a highly engaging workshop where students throughout Middlesex County were empowered to create lasting positive changes in their school and community.

— *Lyn Connery, Student Assistance Counselor-Westbrook High School*



The students from Westbrook High School that attended were Taylor Amendola, Karim Jabil, Megan Lobutko, Callie Hagemester, Ari Tomassetti, Ayla Toussaint, Bethany Schuster, Sarah Luft, Jessica Chamberlain, and Morgan Wilderman.

• Recreation Department continued from page 9 •

weeks. We have good news for families from Westbrook. We have decided to add another week of childcare after summer camp is done. It will be called Hang-Out Week, in our brochure. Please call 1-860-399-3095, with any questions or concerns regarding registration.

Our ninth annual Westbrook Family Day is on June 11, 2011 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. Be sure to mark this date on your calendar for a fun-filled day of clowns, rides, food,

and entertainment. This event is organized each year by the Westbrook Recreation Board and is totally free to the public through donations from local shoreline groups, clubs, and businesses. If you've never been to this exciting town function, you're in for a big treat. Come join our community and celebrate this All-American annual event. Westbrook Family Day will have a rain date of Sunday, June 12. If you wish to volunteer or make a donation, please call Rich at 1-860-399-3095.

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Westbrook Family Day

The mission of the Westbrook Recreation Board is to develop, operate, and maintain a recreation department that enriches the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Our goal is to provide quality, accessible facilities, programs and services. Our mission will be met by offering passive and active recreational opportunities that are desired, educational, and diverse. Our programs will benefit tots, youth, adults, and seniors in a spirit of fellowship and community pride.

— *The Westbrook Board of Recreation*

From the Registrar

The Registrars are conducting the yearly canvass during the months of January through May. Not all registered voters will receive a "Confirmation of Voting Residence" letter. The Registrars use the National Change of Address (NCOA) system to update the Registry list. A list of names and addresses were sent to the Registrars to process. Only those electors whose names were on this list should have received a notice from the Registrars asking them to confirm their present voting residence, mailing address, or to verify any other changes. Those registered voters who have received a "Confirmation of Voting

Residence" form to fill out and did not respond by the date indicated on the form will have their name put on the "Inactive List" as mandated by State Statutes. Please help by reporting to the Registrars whenever you have made a change to your resident address, mailing address or name, or would like to change your party affiliation. Please call our office (860-399-3042), send a note, or stop by the office on Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or Thursdays from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. The Registrars are also in the office on other unscheduled days, or you may call for an appointment.

Westbrook Land Conservation Trust Annual Open House

WLCT's Annual Open House provided a tour of a "New-Old" house at 131 Pritchett Drive, Westbrook. Kristin and Mark Leas' home is a reconstruction of a 1780s cape: the former Pratt House, one of Westbrook's oldest homes. It is a marvelous example of reusing, recycling, and repurposing.

The members present enjoyed all the information on the history of the house as well as how various features of the old house were recreated in the newly built structure. Members Gordon Towle and Randy Bell shared how their woodworking skills added to the final product.

— Sandy Towle, WLCT



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Dog Licenses

June is Dog License Month! The Westbrook Town Clerk's Office is gearing up for "Dog Licenses 2011." The license period runs from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. We send out reminders to current registered dog owners at the end of May. If you are a "new" dog owner or about to become one, please be aware your dog must be registered in the town in which you live.

In accordance with State Statutes (Sec 22-337 through 22-359c), every dog must be licensed when it becomes six months old and then annually in June. In order to license your dog, a current rabies vaccination certificate must be presented when you come in to register your "pooch."

Fees for neutered males and spayed females are \$8.00. The fee for unaltered dogs is \$19.00.

Fees are statutory and are collected by the Town Clerk's Office. There are sepa-



Last year's first place winner – BOGART QUARTI.



Last year's second place winner – WILLY SIZER.



Last year's third place winner - BUSTER FERRY.

continued on page 13

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• Dog Licenses continued from page 12 •

VISTA Conservation Event

rate fees for Kennel Tags. Replacement tags are 50 cents. A late fee of \$1.00 per month is charged when an owner fails to license a dog after six months old and that begins August 1, 2011. However, there is no penalty charged if the owner presents proof of new ownership of his or her dog.

In the past, we have held Rabies Clinics and Top Dog Contests to help remind all dog owners to get their dogs registered in a timely manner; the community has always participated and made each year a success. This year, we will not be holding a clinic or event but we do ask your cooperation in making sure that you have registered your dog before July 1, 2011 or as soon as you have a written proof of rabies vaccination. If you have any questions, please call our office at (860) 399-3044 or email at jangelini@westbrookct.us.



Westbrook students along with Mr. Chris Ehlert provided a presentation to the Vista Program on energy and recycling and how it fit into their daily lives at the VISTA Conservation event held on April 9th. Bobbi from Vista and the students: Julie Blum, 12th grade; Callie Hagemester, 11th grade; Sarah Luft, 11th grade; Kaitlyn Luft, 8th grade.

The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries provides food and fellowship to those in need. Serving the towns of Essex, Chester, Clinton, Madison, Old Saybrook, East Lyme, Lyme, Old Lyme, Killingworth, Westbrook and Deep River.

Learn how you can help at:

www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org

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Westbrook Energy Committee Update

WESTBROOK ENERGY COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Westbrook Energy Committee has finalized the Town's Strategic Energy Management Plan. The plan was presented to the Board of Selectmen at their public meeting on February 24th, 2011. The plan includes a prioritization of the town's energy goals which include supporting individual homeowners and local businesses in becoming more energy efficient, developing a formalized process to access funding for energy projects, and many more. The Energy Committee recognizes that the value of the plan goes way beyond the words on the page and the Town benefited greatly from the planning process. The committee will work hard to implement the Town's energy priorities.

REGIONAL ENERGY PLANNING

Westbrook continues to collaborate with Madison, Branford, Durham, Guilford, and Killingworth on Regional Energy Planning. Currently, the town is evaluating options for applying our allocation of ARRA funds to improve energy efficiency throughout the community in a variety of ways. The Westbrook Energy Committee is stewarding the process and ensuring that the improvements projects align the Town's strategic energy goals.

WESTBROOK ENERGY COMMITTEE EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

At the formation of the committee in 2009, some grant money was set aside for conservation education and awareness. Several projects have taken place throughout the school district since that time, and a town-wide conservation video was also created (you can see it at www.youtube.com by searching for "Westbrook, Conservation Song"). This school year an initiative to educate the community regarding recycling has been underway, and all three of Westbrook Public Schools have been involved.

At Daisy Ingraham Elementary School, a "green" mosaic was designed and created by fourth grade students utilizing various discarded items. The three after-school sessions coordinated by fourth-grade teacher Lauren Palermino were attended by different groups with an occasional adult helper such as art teacher Joe Biegaj. Local mosaic expert Deb Aldo contributed her expertise to assure a lasting final



A "green" mosaic.

continued on page 15

We Have Exciting News!!!

**Brian has been named a
2011 FIVE STAR Real Estate AgentSM.**

The award is only awarded to only 7% of real estate agents in any market area who have scored highest in client and industry peer based research. Each respondent was asked to evaluate only real estate agents whom they have worked with and evaluate them based upon nine criteria: customer service, integrity, market knowledge, communication, negotiation, closing preparation, finds the right home, marketing of home, and overall satisfaction.



Check out the full article in the March edition of Connecticut Magazine.

To everyone who took time out of their busy lives to acknowledge the dedication, professionalism and expertise that Brian works hard to provide every day, Thank you. Your confidence and kind words are appreciated more than you know.



Brian Jermaine, ABR, ASR, CRS, ePRO, GRI, SRES, SRS
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Brian@TeamJermaine.com

Leslie Jermaine, ePRO
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• *Energy Committee continued from page 14* •

product. The design included an earth-centered daisy with juice pouch petals surrounded by plastic bag waves, bubble wrap clouds, and the message "reduce, reuse, recycle." The mosaic now permanently hangs in the hallway of the school.



Used greetings cards were sent to St. Jude's Ranch for reuse.

The WHS Environmental/Hiking Club, led by Patti Laudano and Heather Bull, combined efforts with the Energy Committee to collect used greeting cards to be sent to St. Jude's Ranch for reuse. The card fronts are sent to the ranch to be recycled into new cards, which they then sell for a fund raising effort. Collection bins were placed in the town hall lobby and at WHS, and approximately 30 pounds were collected during a two-month period. This may now become an annual effort by the club.

Groups of students from all three public schools were sent on separate field trips to the Connecticut Resource Recovery Authority Trash Museum in Hartford. Westbrook participates in the single-stream recycling process whereby most plastics, many metals, papers, and cardboards are recycled, and at this museum residents can witness massive amounts of the recyclables collected from their areas being processed. (Please see the full list of recyclables at www.crra.org to learn more about what you can recycle.) The museum also has numerous fun and educating exhibits and educator led tours. The WMS sixth grade group returned so inspired that they started inquiring about how they can increase the recycling at the middle school.

CALL FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION IDEAS FROM WESTBROOK RESIDENTS

Westbrook residents are encouraged to share their energy conservation ideas or success stories with the committee by contacting Suzanne Helchowski at the Office of the First Selectman, 860-399-3040. The committee is also looking for volunteers to join with upcoming outreach efforts within the Westbrook Community.



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Westbrook Youth and Family Services, Inc.

Check out our website at www.wyfs.org!

Kids in Our Community: WYFS would like to extend a special thank you to Emily Schreck and Morgan Wilderman for helping us at our fundraiser.

We are so proud to have the support of Carolyn and Kelsey Xenelis and Madison Bratz, who sold decorative pillows, lip



Carolyn Xenelis, Kelsey Xenelis, and Madison Bratz.

balm, and lotions with the \$145 in proceeds benefiting WYFS.

Sports Night Fundraiser: Thank you to all who supported our Sports Night Fundraiser. We appreciate the community's support!

Counseling Services: Individual, couples, and family counseling services are available to anyone in need. We offer a sliding-scale fee, and nobody will be turned away regardless of his or her ability to pay. *Please call Danielle Dragan, Executive Director for an appointment: 860-399-9239 x12.*

Clinical Programs: *Please call Jacqueline Ward: 860-399-9239x15.*

Autism Spectrum Summer Program: Children will learn age-appropriate behavioral skills through a variety of experiences and community outings. Curriculum includes opportunities for socializing, coping with stress, conflict resolution and dealing with anger, role playing and social rehearsal, verbalizing needs/volume control, relaxation techniques, artistic expression, and self-esteem building.

Two four-week summer sessions are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. First session runs from June 28 through July 21; second session runs from July 26 – August 18. Groups for ages 5-7 (second session only), 8 – 12, and 13 – 18 are available.

ASD Parent Support Group: An open support group for parents with children diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (PDD-NOS, Asperger's Syndrome, etc.). This group meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, from 7-8:30 p.m. Drop-in format. Facilitated group addresses current topics and relevant concerns of parents and their children. Note: Bring your child(ren)! We have skilled clinicians available and a large group room with a Wii sports system, as well as other team games, to encourage socialization while you meet with other parents.

Substance Abuse and Recovery Program: This program is designed to support people in recovery with their immediate needs (employment, housing, etc.) and in making long-term changes by helping them identify and cope with stressors and triggers. This program is expected to begin in the summer. Check our website for more information.

Women's Group: A support group designed for women in transition to support each other in life changes such as divorce, career, children leaving the home, or daily stresses. We will cover coping with stress, self-care, adjusting in difficult times, and much more – you bring your transition and we'll give you the support! Please check our website for more information.

Parenting Group: A curriculum-specific group designed to help and support parents with a variety of parenting issues. Please call for details.

High School Girl's Group: This group is held weekly at Westbrook High School and is designed to empower and support girls by helping them identify and focus on their strengths, and learn strategies for coping with existing and future environmental stressors. Topics will include body image, peer pressure, societal influences, eating disorders, addictions,

continued on page 17

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• *Youth & Family continued from page 16* •

domestic violence, and relationships. This group hosts a girl's night at the agency every other month where the girls can have fun and socialize in healthy ways.

Middle School Girl's Night: Girls come together to discuss a variety of issues that often plague middle school girls. Topics can range from boys to bullying as initiated by the needs of the participants. This group meets once a month on Friday night.

Pizza and refreshments are provided. Call for details.

After-School Program: For children in grades 5–8. Our program offers healthy snacks, homework help, and some play-time! The program runs from 2:25–6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The rate is \$13.00 per day. There is no minimum number of days to sign up for. We offer a drop-in rate of \$15.00 per day for those of you that may just need it from time to time.

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Estuary Council

Estuary Council of Seniors, Inc. has been Serving Seniors in the nine-town Estuary region for 35 years. Call us to receive our *Gazette Newsletter* or go to www.ecsenior.org for our online newsletter, events calendar, menu, and more.

Donate Your Car or Boat to the Estuary Council! Turn your car or boat into a tax deduction by calling: 1-800-716-5868. Vehicle does not have to run! Proceeds benefit the vital services we provide in the nine town Estuary Region.

"Team Avery" Bottle Drive – Thursday, May 26 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Bring your 5 cent deposit bottles to the Estuary Council at 220 Main Street, Old Saybrook and we will take them to the transfer station where they will be turned into cash to help Avery Leopoldino and her family find a cure for CDKL5. Only 200 people are diagnosed with this rare disease! Help 3 year old Avery find a cure.

VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE, Thursday, June 2 from 4 - 6 p.m. The Estuary Council is hosting their annual Volunteer Open House where all ages are welcome to come in and speak to various local nonprofit organizations about their volunteer needs. Students, retirees, or anyone looking to contribute to their com-



Representatives from the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme speaking with potential volunteers at a previous Volunteer Open House.

munity are welcome to meet with non-profits from the Estuary region. Located at 220 Main Street, Old Saybrook.

Save the Date! Our annual Autumn on the Dock Wine Tasting and Auction will happen on Sunday, September 18 – so mark your calendars now.

NEW! CHRONIC ILLNESS SUPPORT GROUP: Meets last Wednesday of each month. Next meeting is Weds., May 25 at 10 am. Call Eileen at 860-339-5531.

INTERESTED IN SCRABBLE? – Call Deb at 860-388-1611.

WOODCARVING CLASS: Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 9 a.m.

Beginners to advanced levels welcome. This group of men and women met and did their first project! Call Ed Gorman at 860-388-5737 for more information.

STAN GREIMANN ESTUARY MEDICAL OUTPATIENT TRANSPORTATION For medical appointments, to any medical location beyond the nine-town estuary region. Call Judy at 388-1611. Suggested donation of \$25. EMOTS is supported by the Senior Resources Agency on Aging with Title III funds available under the Older Americans Act.

CAFÉ MEAL SITES – Chester, Clinton, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, & Westbrook. Reservations required by calling 860-388-1611 by 11 am, 24 hours in advance.

MEALS ON WHEELS – hot meals delivered to your home. Call Diane at 388-1611. A \$2.50 donation request for those aged 60+ ; otherwise cost is \$6.25. Meals are supported by Senior Resources Agency on Aging with Title III funds available under the Older Americans Act.

CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES: Billiards, Ping Pong, Yoga, Exercise Classes, Mah Jongg, Wii, Tai Chi, Cribbage, Writer's Group, Book Club, Quilter's Group, Dominoes, Needlecrafters, Hand and Foot, and more!

ESTUARY THRIFT SHOP: Hours are from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Mon. – Fri. and 9 a.m. – 1 pm on Saturdays. Clothes (men, women, and children), kitchen items, crafts, and more available! Donations are accepted and volunteers always needed!



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Westbrook Early Childhood Council

The Westbrook Early Childhood Council (WECC), celebrating five years of collaborative efforts, strives to expand community knowledge and use of preventive programs and strategies that support the healthy social and emotional development of all children, newborn to age 5, in Westbrook. The WECC is funded by a School Readiness Community Impact Grant to the Westbrook Public Schools from the Middlesex United Way.

On March 29, 2011 the WECC and its Community Partners held, for the fourth year in a row, the Shoreline Early Childhood Community Forum at Daisy Ingraham Elementary School in Westbrook. This special evening for parents and early education and early care providers attracted over 76 participants from Westbrook and neighboring towns! The purpose of the forum was to share knowledge about healthy early childhood development and to offer the opportunity for communication. Participants were able to choose from twelve information sessions on a variety of topics. The knowledgeable and engaging volunteer session presenters were from Daisy Ingraham Elementary School, Yale University Child Study Center, Child Guidance Clinic of Central CT, Kidsteps, Sarah Inc., Middlesex Hospital Family Advocacy Program, Treehouse Players, Earth Friend Discovery Series, and local mental health private practices. Participant feedback indicated that information sessions were valuable, discussions were enjoyable, and that the event ran smoothly and professionally. While a key component to quality programming includes positive and collaborative relationships among children, families, and colleagues, opportunities for networking and learning from each other are rare. For this reason, the forum fills an important need. The mission of the Middlesex United Way is to mobilize the caring power of communities to strengthen lives and help people; for the last three years, the Shoreline Early Childhood Community Forum has been a shining example of this mobilization.

Recently, Marcie Mauro was hired as the new Program Coordinator for the Council to guide the collaborative efforts within the early childhood community. Mauro has extensive wellness programming experience in corporate and community sectors and has worked to strengthen families while interning at Westbrook Youth and Family Services for the past two years. With a Master's Degree in Marriage & Family Therapy, she understands the importance of parents and family as being the first, most important teachers in the lives of children. She is eager to continue to provide families with helpful information related to children, newborn to age 5, so that they can meet with success as they enter the school setting and beyond.

The Westbrook Early Learning Links (WELL) initiative of the WECC continues to support parents as first and most important teachers by the following:

- Providing information about physical, emotional, and educational needs of children
- Connecting families with appropriate health-care providers, early childhood programs, and social service agencies

- Striving to provide programs that meet young families' needs

WELL Information kiosks are located at the Valley Shore YMCA, Westbrook Youth and Family Services, Daisy Ingraham Elementary School, the Mulvey Center (Town Hall), and the Westbrook Public Library. All parent resources and programs are free. Registration with WELL ensures that you will receive notification of WELL program offerings via email and mail. All registration information provided is kept confidential. There are currently more than 75 Westbrook families registered with WELL. Contact the WECC Program Coordinator, Marcie Mauro, to request a WELL registration form (contact information follows). She is also available to meet with families to discuss specific parenting issues or concerns. Feel free to contact her to arrange a convenient meeting place and time.

New Westbrook Early Childhood Council participants from all sectors of our community are always welcome and are encouraged to join regular monthly meetings at Daisy Ingraham Elementary School from 1:00–2:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month – next meeting is May 11. If you are interested in participating in the important work of the council but meetings are difficult for you to attend, an increasing number of volunteer opportunities include assisting with mailings, distributing information during WECC community outreach efforts, conducting workshops, and providing support during information sessions (participant registration, childcare, transportation, food). The past and future success of the WECC is due to the contributions of participants and volunteers! Please contact the Westbrook Early Childhood Council Program Coordinator, Marcie Mauro, with your interest: (860) 334-8830, or WeccWellCoordinator@gmail.com.

— Marcie Mauro, WECC Program Coordinator

MISS MULVEY



Will you go Green with me???

Pay Me Now, or Pay Me Later – A Cautionary Tale for Septic Owners!

The Westbrook Water Pollution Control Commission would like to remind all homeowners that septic tank cleaning at least every five years is required by the Town of Westbrook – and that it's a cost-effective maintenance that every homeowner should practice. Just as you change the oil in your car or the filter in your furnace, pumping septic systems regularly prevents costly repairs down the road!

It typically costs \$5,000 to \$15,000 to replace a failed leaching system with a new one, compared to about \$250 to have a tank pumped and inspected – certainly an economic justification for regular pumpouts! And newer tanks have outlet filters that **MUST** be cleaned regularly, or they will clog and cause a backup into the house. Improperly functioning septic systems contribute to surface and groundwater pollution and can contaminate water wells on your neighbor's property or your own.

Westbrook residents approved a Wastewater Management Ordinance in 2006 that supports the continued use of septic systems but mandates maintenance of individual septic systems through regular pumpouts as well as strict requirements for system improvements when new construction is proposed for the property. But to avoid the expense of centralized sewer systems and mandated public water supplies and to save a costly septic repair, each homeowner should learn to maintain his or her on-site septic system in an environmentally responsible manner.

Some quick tips to keep your septic system healthy:

- Pump the tank every 3-5 years (2 if you have a garbage disposal).
- Don't put food waste, baby or cleaning wipes, or personal products down the toilet or drain.
- Use garbage disposals very sparingly!
- Check regularly for running toilets by putting food coloring in the tank. You may not even hear it, but a leak can add hundreds of gallons of water to your system each day!
- Use liquid detergents in washer and dishwasher.
- Spread water use throughout the day and week.
- Do not discharge water softener backwash to your system – it is illegal and can damage your septic system.

If you don't know when your system was last pumped, you may check our computer records at www.SepticSearch.com. If there is no record in the computer, you may come into Town Hall and ask the Land Use staff to check the property file. When you contract with a pumper to maintain your system, be sure to remind him to enter the pumpout in the computer – it should be part of the service!

Brochures describing how a septic system works, and how it should be cared for, are available in the Land Use office at Town Hall. Please do your part to keep Westbrook's surface and ground waters clean and safe and prevent an expensive repair down the road!

– Marilyn Ozols, mozols@snet.net

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WESTBROOK NEWCOMERS' GUIDE

Welcome to Westbrook!

On behalf of *Events Magazines*, welcome to Westbrook. Whether you are new to Connecticut or just new to Westbrook you will find wonderful people and places to visit in town. From the Westbrook Fire Department Carnival to the Westbrook Fife & Drum Muster Parade, Westbrook has something for everyone. Below are important phone numbers. Please tear out this page and keep it for future reference. We at *Events Magazines* and Essex Printing support local businesses.

Please use this guide and "Buy Local" – we do!

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 9 TOWN TRANSIT (860) 510-0429
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Fax: (860) 524-7395

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E-mail: Comptroller.Lembo@po.state.ct.us

Attorney General George C. Jepson

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State Representative James Crawford

35th District
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State Capitol
Legislative Office Building, Room 4010
Hartford, CT 06106
1-800-842-8267
local: 112 Spencer Plains Road
Westbrook, CT 06498
860-399-0260

State Representative Marilyn Giuliano

23rd District
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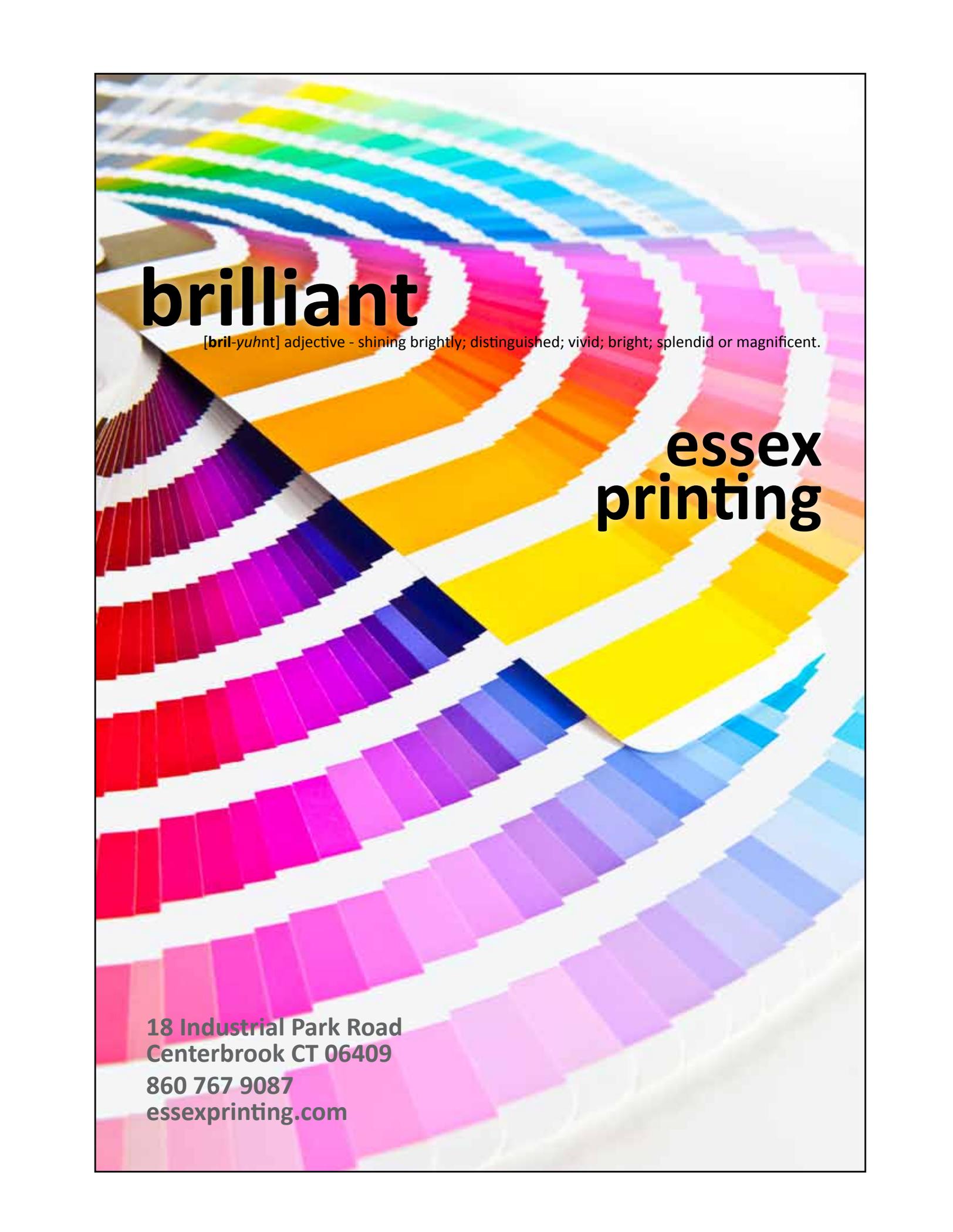
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