

# NEWSLETTER

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## WISH TO DONATE?

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## CALLING ALL SERVICE MINDED VOLUNTEERS

There are 4 Town offices and 16 seats on various town boards and commissions up for election in November 2025. Anyone interested in serving the Town of Salem in becoming a candidate for one of these positions please contact the Salem DTC. In addition to candidates the Salem DTC wants to build a list of interested volunteers who would be interested in being appointed to a town board or commission as positions become available over time.

**Contact information: Gary Closius: [gclosius@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gclosius@sbcglobal.net), or call 860-961-9173. We want to hear from you!!**

## FOUR TOWN OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION IN 2025

### Board of Selectmen (3 seats)

Name	Title	Party	Term
Ed Chmielewski	First Selectman	R	2023-2025
Thomas (TJ) Butcher	Selectman	D	2021-2025
Pam Munro	Selectman	R	2021-2025

### Registrar of Voters (1 seat)

Name	Title	Party	Term
Betsy Butts	Registrar of Voters	D	2025-2029

## SIXTEEN SEATS ON BOARDS & COMMISSIONS UP FOR ELECTION IN 2025

### Board of Finance (4 seats)

Name	Title	Party	Term
William "Skip" Dickson	Chairman	R	2019-2025
Cory Bourgeois	Clerk	R	2021-2025
Matt Rucci	Alternate	D	2023-2025
Mary Ann Casciano	Alternate	R	2021-2025

**CALLING ALL SERVICE MINDED VOLUNTEERS** (continued from p 1)**Board of Education (3 seats)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
Sean Reith	Chairman	R	2023-2025
Erik Trotter	Member	R	2023-2025
<b>Jennifer Rucci</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>2019-2025</b>

**Planning and Zoning Commission (5 seats)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
Vernon Smith	Chairman	R	2025
James Jorgensen	Vice-Chairman	R	2025
John Gadbois	Member	R	2025
Mark <u>Medrzychowski</u>	Alternate	R	2025
<b>Vacancy</b>	<b>Alternate</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>2025</b>

**Board of Assessment Appeals (2 seats)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
Robert M. Green	Chairman	R	2021-2025
<b>Dennis Girard</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>2023-2025</b>

**Library Board of Directors (2 seats)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
<u>Mary Cikat</u>	Secretary	D	2025
Teresa Jorgensen	Member	R	2025

**FIVE SEATS ON BOARDS & COMMISSIONS UP FOR APPOINTMENT IN 2025****Inland Wetlands & Conservation Commission (1 seat)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
Larry Moore	Alternate	U	2019 - 2025

**Economic Development Commission (2 seats)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
<b>Vacancy One</b>	<b>Alternate</b>		<b>2023-2028</b>
<b>Vacancy Two</b>	<b>Alternate</b>		<b>2021-2026</b>

**CALLING ALL SERVICE MINDED VOLUNTEERS** *(continued from p 2)***Recreation Commission (2 seats)**

Name	Title	Party	Term
Mary Durkee	Chairperson	R	2019-2024
<b>Vacancy</b>	<b>Member</b>		<b>2022-2027</b>

**STATE SENATOR MARTHA MARX TO HOLD A LISTENING TOUR**

Next week, State Senator for the 20<sup>th</sup> district is planning on holding a **Listening Tour** throughout our region, taking opportunities to meet with people directly and hear from them about what they're dealing with right now, as well as how legislators can potentially help in next year's legislative session. These events provide her with important feedback from constituents and helps her know how people feel about our state.

***December Listening Tour events are scheduled as follows:***

- Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 PM – Montville Public Safety Meeting Room
- Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 PM – New London Library
- Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, noon – Waterford Library
- Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM – East Lyme Senior Center
- Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM – Old Lyme Town Hall

***Telephone Listening Event:***

- Monday December 16<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM. & 7:00 PM. On Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. You may receive a call on your landline providing instructions on how to participate in the listening event on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to check your landline messages.

**STAFF TURNOVER AT THE SALEM SCHOOL**

Several parents of Salem School students have expressed concern regarding the trend of staff turnover at the Salem School on social media. Below is a joint Communication from Board of Education Chair and the Salem Superintendent of Schools that provides some background and facts on this issue.

**SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT**

200 Hartford Road, Salem, CT 06420

December 6, 2024

Dear Salem School Community,

We recognize that the recent staff turnover within our district has understandably raised concerns among parents, staff, and community members. We want to directly address this situation and provide helpful context, while also outlining the steps we are taking to ensure stability and the continued success of our students.

While teacher turnover is a growing trend across the state, in Salem it has been driven by several factors including retirements, career advancements, personal reasons, and unfortunate instances of serious misconduct, some of which involved investigations by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the State Police. It is also important to note -

## **STAFF TURNOVER AT THE SALEM SCHOOL** *(continued from p 3)*

for context - that staff turnover is not a new issue for our district. During the previous superintendent's tenure, the district experienced significant turnover, including 20 certified staff positions in the first three years. This turnover included the departure of all three district administrators.

We also recognize that open communication is key during this period of transition. From September 2021 to the present, 28 certified staff members and 2 administrators have left the district. The most common reasons include retirement and participation in the Board's Early Notification of Retirement Incentive, a program that, although new to Salem, is used widely across CT districts to assist with budget planning, (10, 33%), resignations due to misconduct or performance issues (6, 20%), leaving for other districts offering higher pay or shorter commutes (7, 23%), professional advancement from teacher to administrator (1, 3%), termination (1, 3%) family obligations or health-related reasons (1, 3%), and leaving the education industry altogether (4, 13%). It is clear that not all reasons for turnover are within the district's control; however, the administrative team and the Board of Education have data that allows reflection of contributing factors that are within our control such as the initiative for early retirement notification incentive. This awareness provides opportunity for re-evaluation of the continuance of those efforts in the future.

We want to reassure everyone that we fully understand the importance of maintaining stability and consistency in our staff to create the best possible learning environment and student outcomes for our students. And we are very fortunate to have a talented, caring and capable staff. Our focus has been and will continue to be on maintaining a work environment where staff feel supported, valued, and engaged. The administration has worked diligently to foster a culture of accountability, professionalism, support, and transparency. We believe these efforts will reduce undesired future turnover. In order to retain quality staff we will continue to look to enhance professional development opportunities, advocate to remain competitive in compensation packages, and provide additional resources to support teacher well-being.

It is also important that we consider school climate data which demonstrates significant improvements in key areas, such as staff satisfaction and engagement. For a comprehensive review of the staff climate data over the years, which the Board reviews regularly, please [click here](#).\*

Together, we will continue working toward our shared goal of providing the highest quality education to all of our students and ensuring Salem remains a great place to teach, learn, and grow.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Sean Reith  
Chairman, Salem Board of Education



Brian Hendrickson  
Superintendent of Schools

\* Spring 2024 Climate Survey Strategic Plan Key Measure Summary Table link:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RGiHLmjcrmvzYXvDQEkOpx4XJZ3B0LD/edit>,  
complete survey results listed in table format link:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LYsi1oauu3a2EFBc74PnJudPmRWqbmRQEW\\_OkhI13BM/edit?tab=t.0](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LYsi1oauu3a2EFBc74PnJudPmRWqbmRQEW_OkhI13BM/edit?tab=t.0).

## **OPINION**

### **Sanity And Flexibility In Board Of Education Budgeting**

#### ***Background:***

#### **Connecticut General Statute § 10-248a – Unexpended Education Funds Account**

*For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes or any special act, municipal charter, home rule ordinance or other ordinance, a local board of*

**OPINION (continued from p 4)****Sanity And Flexibility In Board Of Education Budgeting (continued)**

education may deposit into a non-lapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education, provided:

- (1) such deposited amount does not exceed two per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for education for such prior fiscal year,
- (2) each expenditure from such account shall be made only for educational purposes, and
- (3) each such expenditure shall be authorized by the local board of education for such town.

(Amended by P. A. 24-0045, S. 7 of the Connecticut Acts of the 2024 Regular Session, eff. 5/21/2024.)

In the May of 2024, the CT legislature passed and Governor Lamont approved Public Act 24-45. Section 8 of the act will allow regional boards of education to create (and expend monies from) these funds for any "educational expenditure," not just capital projects/improvements and equipment purchases. The Act renames the account "The Reserve Fund For Educational Expenditures" instead of the former "Reserve Fund For Capital And Nonrecurring Expenditures."

**Opinion**

This new provision allows the Salem Board of Education (BOE) to decide how much, if any, to place into such an account (up to the 2% cap) or create one if one does not exist. This provided the BOE flexibility in managing unbudgeted mandated expenses. Previously Salem's Board of Finance (BOF) was reluctant to create such an account and then make any deposits into it, since any unexpended monies would otherwise revert back to the town at the end of the fiscal year. This often placed the BOE when faced with large unbudgeted expenses or large cuts to the requested budget to redirect funds from other areas of the budget. (e.g., the requirement to fund the mandated by CT General Statutes expenses associated with special needs students new to the Salem School District which often exceed several hundred thousand dollars.) The alternative available to the BOE is to request the BOF, at the time of need request, authorize a supplementary appropriation. If the supplementary appropriation exceeds 0.02% of the Town's budget (in the range of \$36,00) it would require approval at a Town Meeting and possibly a referendum vote with the risk of not being approved. This could result the need to take drastic cost cutting measures up to and including staff reductions during the school year.

As we enter the budget development season, I strongly urge the BOF not to summarily cut any proposed BOE budget by the amount currently in the "Reserve Fund For Educational Expenditures" as this would circumvent the purpose of Connecticut General Statute § 10-248a and eliminate any flexibility it provided the to the BOE to manage unknown mandated funding requirements.

By: Gary Closius – Chairman – Salem DTC, December 7, 2024

**PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES**

On May 23, 2024 Governor Lamont signed legislation creating a state law that exempts from property taxes the primary residence or motor vehicle of former members of the United States Armed Forces who have a permanent and total disability rating resulting from their active-duty service. The bill was approved with the unanimous support of every member of the Connecticut General Assembly present and voting. The legislation is Public Act 24-46, An Act Establishing a Property Tax Exemption for Veterans Who Have a Service-Connected Permanent and Total Disability Rating. It took effect October 1, 2024.

The exemption applies to a home that is owned by an eligible service member and is their primary residence. If an eligible service member does not own a home, the exemption will apply to one motor vehicle owned by the service member.

To qualify, the former service member must have served in the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, or Space Force; have a service-connected permanent and total disability rating as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; reside in Connecticut; and file for the exemption with the town assessor.

Information provided by Dennis Girad, member, Salem Board of Assessment Appeals

**GUN VIOLENCE – 2024 STATISTICS AND DATA**

2024	Mass Shootings	Deaths	Injuries
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>1,795</b>
January	36	66	110
February	26	40	107
March	32	35	138
April	37	32	178
May	49	53	208
June	72	57	378
July	63	68	304
August	52	37	211
September	36	40	161
October	29	27	151
November	29	39	111
December			

\* Data current through November 30<sup>th</sup>

The 10 States With The:	
Strictest Gun Laws	Most Lenient Gun Laws
California	Mississippi
Illinois	Wyoming
New York	Montana
Connecticut	Idaho
Hawaii	Georgia
New Jersey	Arkansas
Maryland	South Dakota
Massachusetts	Oklahoma
Washington	New Hampshire
Colorado	Kentucky

Shootings By State					
State	# Current Month	# Year To Date	State	# Current Month	# Year To Date
Illinois	0	31	South Carolina	0	6
California	3	29	Washington	0	5
Pennsylvania	2	29	Connecticut	1	4
Texas	1	29	Arizona	0	3
Florida	2	28	Kansas	1	3
Alabama	1	24	Nevada	1	3
Missouri	1	22	New Jersey	0	3
Mississippi	2	21	Delaware	0	2
Georgia	1	20	South Dakota	0	2
Ohio	1	18	West Virginia	0	2
Tennessee	1	17	Alaska	0	1
Louisiana	3	16	Hawaii	0	1
New York	0	15	Iowa	0	1
Michigan	1	14	Maine	0	1
North Carolina	0	14	Nebraska	0	1
District of Columb	0	13	New Mexico	0	1
Virginia	1	13	Idaho	0	0
Kentucky	0	11	Montana	0	0
Indiana	0	10	New Hampshire	0	0
Minnesota	1	9	North Dakota	0	0
Oklahoma	1	7	Oregon	0	0
Wisconsin	0	7	Rhode Island	0	0
Arkansas	0	6	Utah	0	0
Colorado	3	6	Vermont	0	0
Maryland	1	6	Wyoming	0	0
Massachusetts	0	6			

**Total deaths (all causes) in the U.S. due to gun violence\*** 15,576  
**Total injuries (all causes) in the U.S. due to gun violence\*** 29,715

\* Data through December 5<sup>th</sup>

<b>DARK BLUE:</b>	Democrats won the majority 4 times
<b>LIGHT BLUE:</b>	Democrats won the 3 times
<b>PURPLE:</b>	Democrats and Republicans each won twice
<b>LIGHT RED</b>	Republicans won the 3 times
<b>DARK RED</b>	Republicans won the 4 times

**NOTICE OF ARPA SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

Posted on: December 5, 2024 - 12:00pm

**Town of Salem  
 Notice of Special Town Meeting**

Electors and citizens qualified to vote at Town Meetings of the Town of Salem are hereby duly notified and warned that a special Town Meeting of the Town of Salem will be held at the Salem Town Hall, 270 Hartford Road, Wednesday, December 18, 2024 at 6:00 PM for the following purposes:

1. To act on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Committee approved allocations by a yes or no vote.

Copies of said warning are on file and open to public inspection at the office of the Town Clerk.

Dated at Salem, Connecticut, this 5th day of December 2024.

Edward Chmielewski, Jr., First Selectman

TJ Butcher  
 Kevin Lyden  
 Ronald LaBonte  
 Pamela Munro  
 Board of Selectmen

**NOTICE OF ARPA SPECIAL TOWN MEETING (continued from p 7)**

**TOWN OF SALEM ARPA ALLOCATIONS**

**Transfer Station Upgrades** **\$70,000.00**

*This will include fabrication of new hopper/chute. Replacing a deteriorated concrete slab. Installation of Jersey Barriers and other minor upgrades.*

**Library Upgrades** **\$20,000.00**

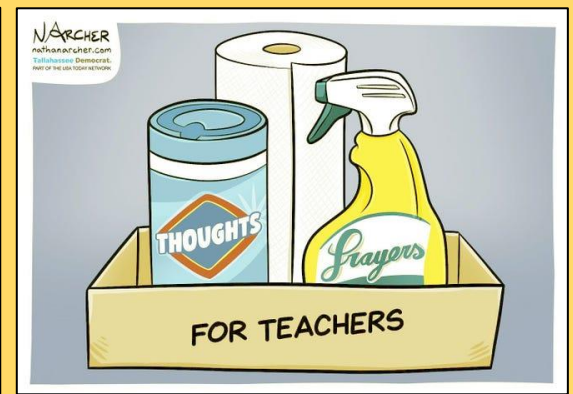
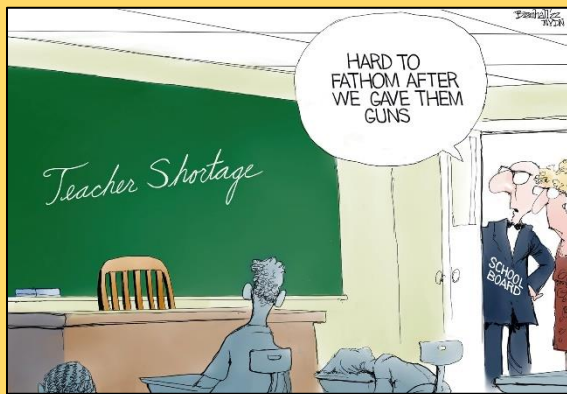
*This will include new flooring to community room and entrance lobby. New shelving as needed and various small upgrades.*

**Municipal Buildings Upgrades** **\$80,000.00**

*This will include exterior painting of Center School. Assessment/ Repair of Center School furnace. Exterior painting of Historical Society including Hearse house. Repairs/ Upgrades to wooden Public Works 4 bay garage. Various other upgrades.*

**Payment of a \$1,000 stipend to Volunteer Emergency Responders** **\$30,000.00**

*Payment of a \$1,000 stipend to Volunteer Emergency Responders who qualified for the Emergency Responders Awards Ordinance on 6/30/2024 or related Volunteer Emergency Responders needs.*



**AROUND TOWN – November**

• **Tax Collector\***

- We currently have a collection rate of 57.45%, with seven months left in this fiscal year.
- We have mailed out second half reminders for personal property and non-escrowed real estate taxes, (roughly 500). They were well received by our residents with our test run last year, and will be sent every November going forward.

• **Recreation Commission**

- See p 12 for Recreation Commission events.

• **Emergency Services:**

- **Fire Marshal Report\***

‣ **Emergency Calls:**

* Fire	2
* EMS Calls	33
* Hazmat Calls	3
* Service Calls	5
* False Alarms	2
* Cancelled Calls	<u>13</u>
<b>TOTAL CALLS</b>	<b>58</b>

‣ **Calls Town:**

* Bozrah	7
* Salem	36
* Colchester	9
* East Haddam	2
* Lyme	2
* Montville	<u>3</u>
<b>TOTAL CALLS</b>	<b>59</b>

‣ **Mutual Aid:**

	<b>Provided</b>	<b>Given</b>
* Bozrah	7	0
* Colchester	8	1
* East Haddam	2	0
* Lyme	2	0
* Oakdale	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>

**AROUND TOWN – November**  
**(continued from p 8)**

★ *The data source – The First Selectman’s November Report was unavailable at the time of publication of the Newsletter.*

**- Fire Marshal Report Report (continued)**

▶ **Total Calls by Station:**

* Station 27 (GLVFC)	14
* Station 21 (SVFC)	5
* Service Calls (Town of Salem)	<u>39</u>
<b>TOTAL CALLS</b>	<b>58</b>

▶ **Inspections Completed in June:**

- \* 26 New London Rd
- \* Two Sisters Trading Post- Unit 1
- \* Management Office- Unit 2
- \* Online Clothing Sales Office- Unit 3
- \* CheonSu Spa- Units 3 & 4

● **Salem Resident State Trooper & Colchester Troop K**

★

▶ **Calls For Service:**

	<u>September</u>	<u>YTD</u>
* Accidents	★	★
* Criminal Investigations	★	★
* Burglaries	★	★
* Larcenies	★	★
* Nonreportable Matters	★	★
* Total Arrests	<u>★</u>	<u>★</u>
<b>TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>★</b>	<b>★</b>

▶ **Motor Vehicle Enforcement:**

	<u>September</u>	<u>YTD</u>
* Onsite DUIs	★	★
* Arrests	★	★
* Misdemeanor Summons	★	★
* Infractions	★	★
* Written Warnings	★	★
* Verbal Warnings	<u>★</u>	<u>★</u>
<b>TOTAL TRAFFIC STOPS</b>	<b>★</b>	<b>★</b>

● **The Salem Free Public Library (SFPL) Director’s Report**

- The Library applied for and received a grant from Chelsea Groton Foundation for \$1,250.
- An increase in the minimum wage will be effective on January 1, 2025. Any staff making minimum wage will have a pay increase to \$16.35/hour.
- The SFPL served 1,397 patrons and provided 29 patrons with technical help in November.

See pp 10-12 for additional library events.

\* Excerpted from the First Selectman’s Report for November.

**MONTVILLE ANIMAL SHELTER**

On November 19, 2024, bids for the Montville Animal Shelter were opened. Nine bids were submitted, ranging from the highest, \$3,528,336, to the lowest \$2,738,000. Usually, the three lowest bids will be carefully read and assessed, before making a decision as to which to accept. A meeting of the Montville Town Council, will be held on December 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Montville Town Hall. Any new information arising from that meeting will be shared. It is hoped that the bid winner will be named and the date when ground breaking and construction will begin will be announced. The Montville Animal Shelter is currently in need of bone marrow bones and cleaning supplies. Please be aware that the population of the animals changes all the time, so if you wish to donate, please call the Shelter (860) 848-3529, for further information on what supplies are needed.

***Other important matters:***

Another important matter concerns the monetary donations the public has made to the Norwich Town Veterinary Hospital. Norwich Town Veterinary Hospital has been purchased by Pieper Veterinary (formerly Pieper Olson Veterinary Hospital). To date not all of the funds that had been donated to the Norwich Town Veterinary Hospital for the animal’s medical needs have been used. Lieutenant David Bradford of the Montville Police Dept. is in charge of the animal shelter and has indicated these funds will remain with Pieper Veterinary until they are used up and he would be managing any future donations. ***If anyone would like to send a contribution for the animals at the shelter, for their medical needs please contact: Lieutenant Bradford @ (860) 892-6109.***

Additionally, in the past when animals at the Montville Animal Shelter required medical attention, they were sent to Norwich Town Veterinary Hospital. A decision will be made to determine where the Montville Animal Shelter would send animals in need of medical attention in the future.

**Story by: Rita Howell**



**PUBLIC TOWN MEETINGS FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY**

*Meetings in January 2025*

**Library Board of Directors,**  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM

**Planning & Zoning Commission,**  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**BOE Policy,**  
December 16<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 PM

**BOE Curriculum,**  
December 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM

**Salem Green Cemetery Association**  
December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 PM

**Charter Revision Commission,**  
December 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Inland Wetlands & Conservation Commission (IWCC),** January 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Board of Education Personnel/Contract Negotiations,** January 8<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Emergency Preparedness Agency,**  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Board of Finance,**  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Budget/Finance**  
December 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM

**Recreation Commission,**  
16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Economic Development Commission,**  
December 17<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM

**Charter Revision Commission**  
January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Board of Selectmen**  
January 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

**Board of Finance,**  
January 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

To view the Town Public Meeting Calendar, click on: [saalemct.gov/calendar-by-event-type/16/month/2024-11](http://saalemct.gov/calendar-by-event-type/16/month/2024-11)

**THE SDTC MEETING SCHEDULE**

**The SDTC 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule**

- **Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:00 PM** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM,** at the Center School
- **Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:00 PM,** at the Center School

**COMMUNITY HELP / ASSISTANCE**

**211 INFOLINE HELP STARTS HERE**

Call 2-1-1 for your connection to:

- Alzheimer's resources
- Basic needs – food, clothing, shelter
- Child care services
- Child health care
- Consumer health
- Crisis intervention
- Disability services
- Drug & alcohol programs
- Emergency shelter
- Emergency assistance
- Financial assistance
- Health care
- HIV/AIDS
- Housing
- Legal assistance
- Parenting programs
- Pre-natal care
- Senior services
- Suicide prevention
- Transportation
- Veteran's services
- Volunteering
- And much more

**CARE & SHARE**

Care & Share of East Lyme, Inc. provides food, financial and emergency support to individuals and families in East Lyme, Niantic, and Salem. ***If you are interested in receiving assistance, contact them at 860-739-8502.*** Leave a message with your name, telephone number and the type of assistance you are looking for, as well as the best time you can be reached. A responder will confidentially return your call. **To see what other services they provide visit their website by clicking on: [careandshareofel.org/](http://careandshareofel.org/).**

**THAMES VALLEY COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY ACTION (TVCCA)****CONNECTION = Volunteering & Veterans Coffeehouses**

Now more than ever community support is so important and impactful! AmeriCorps Seniors offers the support someone needs to remain living at home. Our volunteers lend a hand with grocery shopping needs, visiting, phone reassurance or local medical rides. If you are 55+ contact us to hear how your help may improve the quality of life of an elderly or disabled person by volunteering to help a neighbor in your community. Our volunteers are here for the community! Our services are available free of charge to seniors or disabled people that are homebound and need help with grocery shopping, medical rides, and visiting.



**Contact: Renee LaBonte, Program Coordinator of Senior Volunteer Services at 860-425-6608 or e-mail: [rlabonte@tvcca.org](mailto:rlabonte@tvcca.org).**

Visit our website by clicking on: [tvcca.org](http://tvcca.org) or [facebook.com/TVCCArsvp/](https://facebook.com/TVCCArsvp/).

**CONNECT WITH VETERANS!** TVCCA hosts monthly veteran coffeehouses to meet and socialize with other veterans and their spouses and receive information about veteran benefits and services. We host coffeehouses in Groton, Mystic, New London, Pawcatuck, Norwich, and Montville.

**Contact James Hodge, Veterans Coffeehouse Coordinator at 860-425-6615 or e-mail: [jhodge@tvcca.org](mailto:jhodge@tvcca.org).**

- **ENERGY ASSISTANCE AND OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FROM THAMES VALLEY COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY ACTION, INC. (TVCCA)**

TVCCA provides energy assistance among other community assistance services. Visit the TVCCA website by clicking on: [tvcca.org/energy-assistance/](http://tvcca.org/energy-assistance/) for more information and a direct link to the application. If you have any questions or need help completing the application form, **contact TVCCA at 860-889-1365**. Note that not only does TVCCA provide funding for oil, but also for wood. TVCCA also has a Senior Nutrition Program for seniors 60 and over & Volunteer programs for seniors age 55 or over.

**COMMUNITY NEWS YOU CAN USE****HOUSE NUMBER SIGNS**

The Salem Fire Co. is selling Emergency "911" Reflective Address Signs that will have your street number on it. These signs make it easier for emergency responders to find your home or property at any time of the day or night. ***If emergency response workers can't find you, they can't help you!*** Minutes and seconds count in emergencies.

They are 6" x 18" in size and come in green or blue. The sign can be mounted to your existing mailbox either in a horizontal or vertical position, or if you do not have a mailbox, it can be mounted to a post at the end of your driveway.

See the attached form at the end of the newsletter to order your sign.

**SALEM FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY****News & Events**

- ***Museum Passes and Discounted Admission Passes***

The Salem Free Public Library Offers Museum Passes And Discounted Admission Passes to many of the museums in our state, **visit the library, or go to the library website by clicking on: [salemct.gov/library/pages/museum-passes](http://salemct.gov/library/pages/museum-passes) to view the library website and view what they have to offer and pass availability.**

**COMMUNITY NEWS YOU CAN USE** (continued from p 11)**SALEM FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY** (continued)

- **Books In The Afternoon Book Club**

**Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup> – The Christmas Cook Club by: Ann Pearlman**

Ann Pearlman's irresistible novel provides the perfect ingredients for a fun and touching read about a group of women who gather each year to share a journey of friendship, hope, heartbreak—and recipes. Every year at Christmastime, Marnie and her closest girlfriends mark their calendars for the cookie exchange. Everyone has to bring a batch of homemade cookies and a bottle of wine, but this year, it's their stories that are especially important—the passion and hopefulness of new romance, the betrayal and disillusionment some relationships bring, the joys and fears of motherhood, the stress of financial troubles. On this evening, at least, the sisterly love they have for one another rises above it all. Celebrating courage and joy in spite of hard times and honoring the importance of women's friendships as well as the embracing bonds of community, Ann Pearlman's delightful novel speaks to us all.

Adults over 18 are welcome. To join the group, e-mail Christine Murtha at: [murthachristine@yahoo.com](mailto:murthachristine@yahoo.com).

- **Salem Free Public Library Tote Bags For Sale**



Available at the circulation desk @ the library.



**\$10.00 Cash or Check made payable to the "Town of Salem".**

- **2025 Winter Reading**

**January 6<sup>th</sup>, through February 28<sup>th</sup>**

Register at the circulation desk beginning January 6<sup>th</sup> to receive your BINGO reading log.



Receive a raffle ticket for each BINGO completed when you turn in your log by February 28<sup>th</sup>

- **Winter Storytimes**

**Wednesdays, January 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, & February 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>.**

Please register at the circulation desk or call 860-859-1130



- **Quiet Time Reading Club**

**We are trying something new. Quiet time reading for adults!!!**

**Saturday, December, 21<sup>st</sup>, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

Bring your own book to read in silence. After 45 minutes you may socialize, keep reading or feel free to leave.

**Call 860 859-1130 to register**



- **Fill The Basket Sock Drive**

**November 1<sup>st</sup> – February 1<sup>st</sup>**



The library will be accepting new socks for all ages. Socks must be in package or have tags attached.



**Drop off at: Salem Free Public Library  
264 Hartford Rd, Salem.**

Please place donations in designated basket by wooden table as you enter the library.



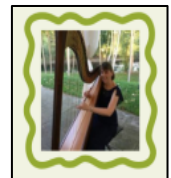
- **Holiday Concert**

**Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 PM**

Debra Vinick, Harpist.  
Light refreshments will be served.

**Call 860 859-1130 to register**

(Sponsored by: The Friends of the Salem Free Public Library)



- **Birds Of Prey**

**Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, at 11:00 AM**

Celebrate **Take your Child to the Library Day** with the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center's Presentation on birds of prey.

**Suitable for ages 6 & up.**

**Call 860 859-1130 to register**

(Sponsored by the Friends of the Salem Free Public Library)



**COMMUNITY NEWS YOU CAN USE (continued from p 12)**

**SALEM FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY (continued)**

• **Tiny Art Show Kits**



Available beginning February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Open to participants ages 8 to adult.

Register to receive a kit with the promise to return the finished artwork by February 28<sup>th</sup>. Artwork will be displayed at the Library's Tiny Art Show from March 5<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Register for a kit by calling 860 859-1130. **Contact the library for submissions criteria.**



(Sponsored by the Friends of the Salem Free Public Library)

**SALEM RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

There are many activities for Salem residents of all ages:

• **ADULT REC CO-ED PICK-UP GAMES**

PICKLEBALL



Tuesdays  
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM  
October 1<sup>st</sup> to April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Salem School Multi-Purpose Room

Saturdays  
9:00 PM – 11:00 AM  
October 19<sup>th</sup> to April 5<sup>th</sup>

VOLLEYBALL



Tuesdays  
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM  
October 1<sup>st</sup> to April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Salem School Gym

BASKETBALL



Tuesdays  
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  
October 1<sup>st</sup> to April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Salem School Gym

**Open Gym Games for Salem & East Lyme Residents, ages 18 & up. Sign in upon arrival**



**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**FRIENDS OF THE SALEM THE LIBRARY (FOSL)**

The Friends of The Salem Library could always use help sorting books for the book sale, and at the book sales. For future book sorting and book pick-up and work dates, stay tuned and watch for notifications on Facebook. **If you would like to help, contact Carl Nawrocki at 860-608-9970, or Bart Drennen at 860-235-5889.**

**GARDNER LAKE AND SALEM VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES**

Both the Salem and Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Companies are looking for volunteers of **ALL AGES**.

- Salem Volunteer Fire Company – NON-EMERGENCY PHONE: 860-859-0942. To visit their website, click on: <https://www.salemfireco.com/>.
- Gardner Lake Fire Company – NON-EMERGENCY PHONE: 860- 859-1743. To visit their website, click on: [gardnerlakevolunteerfirecompany.com/home](http://gardnerlakevolunteerfirecompany.com/home).

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES (continued from p 13)****MITCHELL FARM EQUINE RETIREMENT**

The Horse Retirement, Horse Sanctuary is looking for help.

Contact Dee Doolittle 860 303-8705, or e-mail: [dee@mitchellfarm.org](mailto:dee@mitchellfarm.org).

**SALEM SCHOOL**

Volunteers are always welcome at **Salem School**. Anyone interested in volunteering can go to the Salem School website by clicking on: [salemschools.org](http://salemschools.org). Put the cursor over the "Our School" tab, & click on the "Forms tab" to access the form, OR visit the school and fill out the form at the front desk of the school. Make sure you bring a picture ID with you.

**LION'S CLUB**

The Lions are looking for volunteers. **Contact Dan Holle at 860-300-7570, or Hugh McKenney at 860-303-0042.**

**THE SALEM LAND TRUST**

The Salem Land Trust (SLT) is an all-volunteer non-profit organization permanently conserving land in Salem for wildlife, their habitats, and for people to enjoy nature. Many volunteers begin by helping to keep our miles of hiking trails clear. Each of our 9 Preserves have experienced land Stewards assigned to them, so new volunteers start learning the job from them and other SLT members experienced with being "in the woods." Out in the field, experienced hikers and wildlife lovers cannot help but pass on their knowledge of nature on to all new volunteers. We also have volunteer opportunities in our Membership and Events Committee as we are always looking for new ways to bring the wonder of nature to more people.

**For more information or if you are interested in volunteering contact Linda Schroeder: e-mail: [lschroeder@snet.net](mailto:lschroeder@snet.net) or call 860-908-9553.**

**CARE & SHARE**

Care & Share of East Lyme, Inc. provides food, financial and emergency support to individuals and families in East Lyme, Niantic, and Salem.

**If you are interested in volunteering your time, contact them at 860-739-8502.**

**CEMETERY CLEAN-UP**

The Salem VFW is always looking for help to clean up the cemeteries. **Watch the Facebook website for future dates for cemetery clean up opportunities.**

**Please bring your gloves, weed-whacker, mower, rakes, and tarps. If you are interested in helping or have a need contact Kay Zak at: 860-889-3989 or e-mail at: [kayzak@hotmail.com](mailto:kayzak@hotmail.com).**

**SENIOR NEWS****SALEM SENIOR CITIZENS GROUP**

The Salem Senior Citizen's Group boasts a current enrolment of over 170 members. Membership has tripled since the beginning of 2022. **Salem (or surrounding town) residents age 50 years or older are welcome to join the Salem Senior Citizen's Group!** Meetings are held at 10:30 AM on the second Tuesday every month at Salem Volunteer Fire Company Firehouse, 424 Hartford Rd. (Rt. 85) in the rear meeting room. A yearly membership dues of \$10 is collected every March. Meetings include town discussions, news, and updates, and interesting guest speakers. After the meeting noon lunch is provided. Trips, events, activities, and classes, throughout the year, are developed by our members.

**For more information, please contact Gary Closius (President): [gclosius@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gclosius@sbcglobal.net), or call 860-961-9173, or Mary Cikatatz (Vice President): [mcikatatz@yahoo.com](mailto:mcikatatz@yahoo.com), or call 860-287-7275.**

Use the following link to view our monthly newsletter: [salemct.gov/salem-senior-citizens/pages/salem-seniors-group-newsletters](http://salemct.gov/salem-senior-citizens/pages/salem-seniors-group-newsletters) and click on the one you want.



## **HOME FIRE PREPAREDNESS CAMPAIGN – AMERICAN RED CROSS**

Most of us don't realize we have just two minutes to escape a home fire — which is the nation's most frequent disaster.

### **On average:**

- **7 people die every day from a home fire, most impacting children and the elderly**
- **More than 30 people suffer injuries from home fires every day**
- **More than \$7 billion in property damage occurs from home fires every year**

That's why the American Red Cross and their partners are preparing families to act quickly through their Home Fire Campaign. They have already made a lifesaving difference, achieving their initial goals of installing 2.5 million free smoke alarms and helping to make 1 million households safer in at-risk communities. But home fires remain a daily threat, so the Home Fire Campaign continues across the country.

**During their home visit, at no cost to you, they will share some simple steps you can take that will help you protect you family against fire.** The visits last about 20 minutes.

### **During your home visit the Red Cross will:**

- Install **FREE** smoke detectors if needed,
- Provide guidance in the development of a **Family Disaster Plan**,
- Provide valuable emergency preparedness tips and information,

All demonstrations and installations services are performed by American Red Cross trained volunteers and/or licensed/insured professionals.

**To Schedule an Appointment** visit the Red Cross webpage by using the link:

<https://www.redcross.org/local/connecticut/about-us/our-work/home-fire-campaign/home-fire-safety-visit.html> and fill out the form. The American Red Cross will contact you asap. They will do their best to schedule an appointment during your preferred timeframe, but may need to request an alternative time or day if it cannot be accommodated.



**American  
Red Cross**

## **Coming soon**

- **Democrat of the Month** highlighting a Democrat that is making a difference.
- The Salem DTC will begin mailing out mailers to towns people highlighting important issues.

**Happy Holidays**

## **To Get A Copy Of The Newsletter**

If you would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail, please send your request along with your e-mail address to:

Gary Closius: [gclosius@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gclosius@sbcglobal.net)

## **SDTC Contact Information**

Gary Closius – Chairman – [gclosius@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gclosius@sbcglobal.net)

Kay Zak – Vice Chairperson – [kayzak@hotmail.com](mailto:kayzak@hotmail.com)

Leslie Hotary – Secretary – [hotaryleslie@gmail.com](mailto:hotaryleslie@gmail.com)

Gary Closius – Newsletter Editor – [gclosius@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gclosius@sbcglobal.net)