

































































































Infectious or biologically active materials  
Dioxin and unknown materials  
Waste oil  
Vehicle batteries and Any commercial hazardous waste

### **CHESTER CEMETERY ASSOCIATION**

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 sundown and visitors are welcome to enjoy the settings. Each cemetery has a trustee who inspects it. 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 need officers and we would welcome new members and volunteers for the board. (860) 526-4004

## **RECREATIONAL / CULTURAL / HISTORICAL**

### **PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

*Elizabeth Netsch, Director*

Members of the Chester Park and Recreation Commission 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 of net expenditures is 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, Chester Creek Overlook at the Town Dock, Pelletier Park on Cedar Lake, Lake View Park on Cedar Lake Road, Parkers Point Boat Launch on the Connecticut River, L'hommideau Park on the Pataconk Brook, and the baseball fields at Chester Elementary School. This year the Commission repurposed parts of the 1986 Big Toy unit and installed new playground equipment at North Quarter Park as part of a 4-year renovation project. Sandy Atkinson donated the use of the water at A Style Above Hair Salon to make this project possible. The Chester Public Works Department was instrumental in maintaining all parks, with extra attention to North Quarter Park and Lake View Park this spring. Volunteers from Divers' Cove helped prepare Pelletier Park for the summer season. Sand was also replaced due to the 2018 flood, in advance of a FEMA Disaster Relief Grant of \$27,482 received for park damage after the close of the fiscal year, with additional repairs to be completed in 2019/2020.

The department sold a record 203 non-resident park passes during the summer of 2018, with income to the Town's General Fund for fiscal year 2018/2019 of \$14,130. Fees collected for the Children's Summer Camp contributed \$32,125 to the General Fund. The balance of Camp fees collected was used to operate the program. Scholarship funds, determined by the Human Services Director and the Chester Elementary School Counselor, funded expenses for those who would not otherwise be able to participate in the Camp. The Camp program operates without money from the taxpayer funded budget. In addition to support from the Town's Human Services department, \$1,685 in contributions were received from Chester Rotary Club, Allison and Michael Abramson, Carolyn and Drew Blicharz, Jessica Dobratz and Nicholas Gorra, Candace and Justin Kronholm, and Kimberly Stack. Camp supplies were donated by David Clark. First Student provided program participants with school bus service from Chester Elementary School and John Winthrop Middle School to the Town Hall during the academic year. Self-funded programs included 142 participants in the 2018 Children's Summer Camp Program, filling 325 spaces. Academic year self-funded program registrations included 7 sessions of Karate with 35 different participants and a field trip to Spare Time with 45 students in grades Kindergarten through grade 8. Flag Football had 12 children and there were 64 youth basketball players as well as 8 adult basketball members. Additional Adult programs included 27 Yoga participants at the Town Hall and 18 registrants for Ballroom Dancing at the Meeting House. American Red Cross courses included two classes each, with 31 participants, in Community CPR/AED and First Aid and 13 enrolled in Babysitter's Training. Our Counselor-in-Training program prepared 13 7th and 8th grade students to assist the Camp Counselors and Lifeguards for the 2019 season.

Chester Parks and Recreation ended the fiscal year in 2019 by registering children in 335 camp spaces. Camp and Lifeguarding positions provided summer employment to 20 local residents, with 9 new staff members hired for 2019. We are fortunate to have the resources of several beautiful park facilities and exceptional employees and volunteers. They help fulfill the purpose of the Chester Park and Recreation Commission by improving the quality of life for all citizens by "Celebrating Community through People, Parks, and Programs".

### **CHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY**

*Stephanie Romano, Library Director*

Have you visited the Chester Library lately? If not, you don't know what you're missing. Did you know the library was host to over 100 programs with over 1200 people in attendance? Monday morning story and craft time doubled in size; children of all ages came and listened to stories by Miss Trish and created a themed craft. Afterwards, parents perused a display of similar themed books while children played on our brightly colored carpet with new and updated toys. The library not only created a comfortable space for children but our computer area received a minor uplift; gone is the bookshelf so patrons can have a more open and comfortable atmosphere to read and work. Another change for the Chester Library was the migration from being a stand-alone library to joining the consortium Bibliomation. Patrons now have access to 70 other public and special libraries across Connecticut and can renew materials and place holds from anywhere at any time. Patrons can also receive updates via text message as well as by email or phone.

The library was very active with its many programs throughout the year. For adults, Elena Bigio educated participants on “Essential Oils,” the holistic benefits of each, and allowed us to sample them. Local author Susan Strecker conducted a three-part “Writer’s Workshop,” which was so popular that a few of the attendees formed their own writers’ group here at the library! The group welcomes new members and meets the second Thursday of the month. Marsha Bansavage facilitated our fall and spring bookchats, Greg Dwyer told us about the “Magic of Communication,” while Tracy Livingston and local pediatrician Lizzy Bird educated us on the importance of staying healthy and preparing for flu season. The library partnered with Masonicare at Chester Village for a wonderful program about “Rosie the Riveter” that had audience members reminiscing about their own Rosie. Let’s not forget the Celtic Chocolate program where a sampling of homemade chocolates and Irish soda bread and tea was served as the audience listened to the history and lore of the Irish. There were so many more fun as well as educational programs that listing them all would be impossible.

Adults weren’t the only ones to enjoy a plethora of programs. The kids kicked off summer with “Library’s Rock,” our summer reading program, which included concert performances by Music with Margie, Sunny Train, the Community Music School and Jonathan’s Corner Music. Fall had budding young artists painting with local artist Leif Nilsson “en plein air” at his studio, and our “Haunted Library” had children of all ages on a scavenger hunt receiving prizes along the way. As the holiday’s rolled around, the Eastern CT Ballet Co entertained young ones with an interactive rendition of “The Nutcracker” at the Chester Meeting House; afterwards everyone received their very own nutcracker ornament. Children had fun decorating cookies and cozied up with hot chocolate as they listened to holiday stories. “A Place Called Hope,” a bird rehabilitation center brought an owl, falcon and an American kestrel to the library; these beautiful creatures are rescued raptors. The library held a “Graphic Novel Cartooning” workshop where kids of all ages created one-of-a-kind books with Karen Schumann of RJ Julia, and families loved trying the many varieties of Oreos when we celebrated National Oreo Cookie Day (hint: red velvet was the favorite). Other programs included: Kidscapades, Rechenka’s eggs, and paint and plant flowerpots. Finally, we hosted a four-part stop motion workshop where kids ages 12+ created short films using an Ipad touch and Legos; this was made possible by a grant from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, submitted by Friends president Cary Hull that focused on STEM/STEAM initiatives.

Programs such as these are not possible without The Friends of the Chester Library. Our Friends work diligently throughout the year holding their four annual book sales which include the holiday book sale and the paperback sale at the Chester Fair. Your generous support of the book sales, donations and community grants provide resources not included in the town budget. Leading the Friends were Cary Hull, President; Susan D. Murphy, Treasurer; and Diane Lindsay and Roseann Ventimiglia, Book Sales. The Friends always welcome new members and are seeking to fill the title of President as well as someone to head future fundraisers. Interested parties should contact the library for details.

The Library Board of Trustees includes Terry Schreiber, Chair; Sandy Senior-Dauer, Vice-Chair; Peggy Carter-Ward; Karin Badger; and Denny Tovey. The Board continues to set the long-term goals and policies that guide all library services.

## CHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Skip Hubbard, President*

With a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the near horizon in 2020, the Chester Historical Society experienced yet another growth year as a resource for Chester history.

### Exhibits and Programs

Our 2018 seasonal exhibit focused on the north and south branches of the Pattaconk Brook, and the numerous industries that occupied the stream banks to use waterpower. The exhibit, titled "Two Streams & Many Industries," was curated by Keith and Sandy Senior-Dauer and was well received by the community and other visitors. We welcomed more than 750 people to the museum.

In February, authors Rob and Tom Miceli showed slides and discussed aspects of their new book, *Chester: Lost, Found, Remembered* to a packed Meetinghouse gathering.

Collaborations with other historical societies resulted in two other events. The 5<sup>th</sup> annual tri-town Vintage Baseball games were played in September at Devitt Field. In March, a full house was treated to Chester films from 1930s to the 1950s. The old films, now digitized, were the result of a grant from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, shared with the Deep River Historical Society.

Together with visits from schoolchildren, nearly 2,100 people attended Society programs, exhibits and activities this past year.

### Development / Fundraising / Membership

This year the Society was the recipient of a generous unrestricted donation from the estate of Barbara Delaney. A very small portion of this donation was used to pay off the remaining member-held notes on the Mill. The organization is now debt free as it begins its 50<sup>th</sup> year.

The Development Committee with the approval of the Trustees invested \$50,000 from the Delaney Estate into our existing investment account at Essex Financial Investment Services. To allow greater future diversity of investment strategies, a similar amount was invested in a new account at Wells Fargo.

The Building Committee, together the Development Committee, identified the replacement of a furnace/HVAC system and removal of several trees as priority items. Both projects were completed this past year. Replacement of the deck floor and some neighboring clapboards are next in line. The two committees are coordinating the costs of these and future improvements with current revenue liquidity and seeking other grant funding sources.

The Society is indebted to Art Christianson and Ed Meehan for their combined efforts and ideas to maintain and improve our building and grounds.

Three very successful fundraising activities contributed to a positive bottom line for operations. In the fall, we were given enough items from the Barbara and Edmund Delaney house to be able to host an Estate Sale at St. Joseph's Parish Center, netting almost \$5,500. Our year-end Annual Appeal topped \$12,000, setting yet another new high.

Our Red Velvet Creative Challenge silent auction in April brought in \$6,000, thanks to the craftsmanship of 45 artists creating artworks from scraps of old red velvet Meeting House stage curtains. Nearly 100 people attended the event at the Meeting House.

We continue to attract new members, the backbone of any community organization. We closed the year with 382 members spread over 239 memberships, an increase of 21% over the last four years. As an all-volunteer non-profit organization, we are most thankful for the continuing time and support of members and local residents.

### **ROBBIE COLLOMORE MUSIC SERIES**

The Robbie Collomore Music Series features world class musicians in four live concerts per season. The concerts cover music in the classical, jazz, folk, bluegrass, and world music genres. The performances take place at the beautiful and intimate Chester Meeting House on Sunday afternoons in the fall and spring. Season subscriptions are available as well as individual tickets.

### **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.

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. 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.

### **CHESTER LAND TRUST**

*Bill Myers*

In 2019, **The Chester Land Trust** continued forward with our dedicated mission of protecting irreplaceable forests, farmlands, wetlands and wildlife for the purpose of enjoying our natural resources, open spaces, and the unique environment for present and future generations, here in Chester. We are so fortunate to have a supportive membership, and friends from the community that generously support our cause for the environment. We are always hopeful that everyone will respect, protect, and admire our open spaces here in Chester. The recently completed Town of Chester 10 year required **Conservation Plan of Conservation and Development**, concluded that open space, recreation, and environmental concerns are a high priority for Chester residents.



The 2019 Board of Trustees consisted of officers: Priscilla Robinson, President, Steve Cline, Vice President, Amy Pullin, Treasurer, and Peter Yuhasz, Secretary. Other members of the dedicated CLT board were Jenny Kitsen Senior Advisor, Fran Curto, Deb Dembo, Marie Anne Heft, Gail Norling, and Bill Myers. We were very fortunate to have all these dedicated trustees volunteer to perform in these roles.

Monitoring and maintenance of our 14 properties continues to be a leading and important task, especially at the Carini and Scudder Preserves in the center of town. Invasive Japanese Knotweed continues to spread on the Carini preserve and our volunteers perform at their best to cut and remove as much as possible. Also at the Carini Preserve, the Great Brook has significant stone and gravel that has washed down in the Fall flood of 2018 impeding the natural flow of the brook, adjacent the Carini Preserve. Town officials are aware of this, and are addressing the issue with future remediation efforts.

Another accomplishment in 2019 was that the CLT became a member of the newly established Lower CT River Land Trust. A new non-profit organization created as a regional Land Trust to share resources, conservation skills and seek grants to help local Land trusts in the CT River Valley.

In September 2018 the CLT completed and submitted an application to be considered by the **Connecticut Freedom Trail** for the Judge Constance Baker Motley Preserve at 100 Cedar Lake Road. On November 14, 2018 the Connecticut Freedom Trail approved the application. A committee comprised of CLT members was formed to prepare the dedication and ceremony for the Motley Preserve in 2019. The committee met over many months preparing the intricate and difficult details of this event. On Sunday October 6th, 2019, at 2 pm, well over 100 people attended the formal dedication by the Freedom Trail officials, followed by a reception, and a house tour by the new owners, *The Colemans*. The home across the street from the preserve is the home where the Motleys lived and owned for 40 years from 1965 to 2005. The former Motley home, and the CLT Motley Preserve both received a Freedom Trail Flag and bronze metal plaque in honor of Constance Baker Motleys extraordinary achievements in Civil rights advancement across the nation. The event was a wonderful and great success!

The Chester Land Trusts Annual 2019 meeting was held on December 5th, at the Chester Town hall meeting room, featuring Guest Speaker **Kelsey Wentling**, the Connecticut River Conservancy's (CRC) new steward for the Connecticut River Conservancy. The topic was trash occurring in the river and watershed. Our second speaker, **Sandy Sandstrom** took the group on a photo journey through Chester. The group enjoyed trying to identify objects and landmarks in and around the village. The speakers were fantastic, and the event was well attended by land trust members, friends, supporters, and it was a great overall success!

In 2019, and also in 2020, we will continue on our mission to update and improve the CLT, including the website, social media, and improve communications with our amazing supportive members and residents.

**CEMETERY ASSOCIATION**

**INCOME:**

Essex Financial Services Trans to Checking 8/6	\$3,000.00
Town of Chester – 2019-20 Budget 11/21	\$3,000.00
CD 51103 H. Brooks                      Interest (trans to checking)	2.68
CD 51104 L. M. Brooks                  Interest (trans to checking)	3.16

**\$6,005.84**

**EXPENSES and DISBURSEMENTS**

**CHECKS:**

6/13 The Hartford Ins. Co. Bond & Late Charge	130.00
6/4 Bill Vile Fall Cleanup and Mowing	1,400.00
11/22 American Legion Flags	500.00
6/27 Bill Vile Mowing	900.00
8/7 Bill Vile Mowing	650.00
8/29 Bill Vile Mowing	650.00
<u>10/28 Bill Vile Mowing</u>	<u>650.00</u>

**\$4,880.00**

Essex Financial Services Annual Fees	\$569.74
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**ASSETS:**

Essex Savings Bank CD 51103 H. Brooks 6mos. .15%	\$1,793.74
CD 51104 L.M. Brooks 6mos. .15%	\$2,110.31
Checking Account	\$4,117.00
Essex Fin.Services Fed. Capital Reserves (money market)	\$1,800.91
Inc. Fund of America (mutual fund)	\$75,373.93
	<b>\$85,195.89</b>

CDS	4.5%	\$3,904.05
Checking and Money Market	7%	\$5,917.91
Mutual Funds	88.5%	\$75,373.93

**\$85,195.89**

**AUDIT**

A copy of the Town of Chester Financial Statements, Internal Control Reports and Compliance Reports for the Year Ending June 30, 2019 can be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office or on the Town of Chester website – [www.chesterct.org](http://www.chesterct.org) under the Board of Finance page.

**TOWN PROFILE**

The 2019 Town of Chester's Profile, provided by CERC, is available on the following link:

<http://profiles.ctdata.org/profiles/>

**PROOF**

**PROOF**