



# TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER

## Middlefield and Rockfall

Volume 1, Number 3

Quarter 3 - 2024

### First Selectman's Message

By Bob Yamartino

Fall is in the air, summer is behind us, children are back in school, and it seems everyone is busy preparing for the Durham Fair. Summer sees peak activity for our Public Works and Park and Rec.

In addition to another successful Summer Camp, Park and Rec continued to protect swimmers at the beach and then held an End of Summer Bash that was terrific. Look for news on the upcoming Trunk or Treat and other fun events in this edition and sign up for automatic notifications on the town website.

Public Works continues to do a spectacular job maintaining and improving our roads. This issue has information about the work they completed on over 6 miles of town road and plans for this coming fall.

The Middlefield Volunteer Fire Company is celebrating 90 years of continuous volunteer service to our community. It is amazing how they have arguably served at least 8 or 9 generations of Middlefield residents. Two new trucks were blessed in a wet down ceremony and placed in service at a recent celebration. A tragic fire demonstrates just how vital their volunteer service is to our community.

There are so many ways for us to enjoy the fall in our community, from pick your own, golf at our local 54 holes, hiking on our conservation lands, mountain biking, boating on Beseck Lake, or watching a local sporting event. Catch the Blue Devils under the lights at the newly renovated stadium at Coginchaug High School.

Have fun, be safe, Cheers!

*Bob*



## Tragedy Struck Our Community

Early Friday morning September 6th, our little town was rocked to its core as we learned about a child perishing in a house fire. Upon hearing about what transpired, each of us experienced a broken heart and a feeling of tremendous loss.

This child was known to many at Brewster and Lyman schools, as well as those who knew his family right here in town. Our hearts are heavy with this news. He was a kind and caring child. Seeing him and his grandfather together, I saw the depth of the love they shared.

My thoughts and prayers are with the family dealing with this unimaginable grief.

I visited John Lyman School and Brewster School Friday before the children arrived to offer support of our town. I saw firsthand the pain our teachers, staff and administrators felt at the death of one so young and innocent.

Many folks in the community have already reached out to the family and me providing assistance and support. Our town is composed of caring and thoughtful people who, once you meet them, instantly become your friends and neighbors. We are truly blessed to live in this community. All of us feel a profound sense of loss.

I offer my sincerest thanks to the Middlefield Federated Church, which opened its doors on Friday night as a sanctuary for those who were in search of a place of comfort.

I also can't express the tremendous respect I have for members of the Middlefield Volunteer Fire Company as well as volunteers from surrounding communities. Arriving at the scene as the last flames in the attic were being extinguished, this fire struck a very different chord than others. The first volunteers on scene were volunteers that lived just doors away; who knew the family personally. Many of our firefighters are parents and/or grandparents themselves, some are young adults that have never experienced such a situation and responding to a fire of this magnitude has challenged their resolve. The loss of a child added an additional toll as they attended to their duties. Ours is a community run on volunteers and our firefighters are true heroes, for whom I give great thanks.

Many thanks to our residents who have been in touch. We love this town and I know we all wish to keep Middlefield Strong.

Bob Yamartino  
First Selectman

## Newsletter Missing?

Did your friend, relative, or neighbor receive their newsletter?



Some people are saying they haven't received the last issue. When speaking with them, please ask if they received it. There have been reports that some people, even neighborhoods, that have not received the previous newsletter.

We want to ensure everyone receives it and your help to pin down the problem would be greatly appreciated!

Report missing newsletters to the Office of the First Selectman, at 860-349-7114 x0.

## Middlefield Volunteer Opportunities Available

There are more opportunities to volunteer and make a difference in your town! Come join in the fun!

Currently, there are openings on the:

- Conservation Commission,
- Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) for both Rockfall sewer district and Beseck Lake residents.
- Inland Wetlands Watercourses Agency

Additionally, we are seeking a:

- Municipal Veteran's Representative, who would be a liaison to the RiverCog Regional Veterans Committee
- Regional Planning Agency Representative, who works with RiverCog's Regional Planning Agency/ Regional Plan of Conservation & Development.

Please reach out to the First Selectman's office for more information at 860-349-7114 x0.

## In Memoriam

The supervisor at the Durham Middlefield Interlocal Agreement Advisory Board (DMLIAB)'s transfer station, Bob "Mat" Matuszkiewicz, passed away in April.

The town's previous Finance Director Joe Geruch, passed away in July. Joe was an integral part of the town offices from 2000-2016.

# Meet Our Recently Appointed Board Members

We are thrilled to welcome the latest member to boards and commissions. We thank her for volunteering to serve and making contributions to our town.

## Beseck Lake Environmental Committee:



*Carmen Kowaleski:* Carmen is a retired literacy specialist in CT public schools, has lived on the lake for 5 years. She looks forward to working on this committee to do her part to preserve the quality of life at the lake that she loves.

## Conservation Commission

*Michael Svitek:* Michael is an avid outdoor enthusiast, from hiking, biking, archery and upland bird hunter, and dog trainer. He loves taking people on his boat and introducing people to the ocean rod & reel and spear fishing experience. Serving on the commission in the past, Michael wishes to pass on his outdoor passion to others.



## Town Receives Insurance Program Member Rebate

Middlefield received a member rebate check for ~ \$2300 from CIRMA (Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency) which is our insurance provider. The coverage is available to us as a member of the Connecticut Council of Municipalities. The monies are a distribution to Middlefield of member equity, given a lower than planned liabilities experience.



## Bright Ordinance Rejected

At the town meeting August 20th, Middlefield residents overwhelmingly rejected the Bright ordinance proposed by the Board of Selectmen. Approximately 75 residents attended the town meeting at the Community Center Auditorium.

Following introductory remarks by 1st Selectman Bob

Yamartino and a brief review of the proposal by Selectman Jim Irish, only one resident Josh Beebe, spoke. However, he seemed to represent the sentiment of the vast majority of attendees.

Mr. Beebe suggested the ordinance proposal was both too broad, and too much of an imposition of town government upon personal property rights. He questioned the open-ended nature of the ordinance proposal with the questions "where does it end" and "won't this turn neighbors against neighbors - and is that what we want?" His comments were met with applause by most attendees.

Following a brief response by Yamartino, the town attendees voted to stop further discussion, and the subsequent vote to adopt the proposed blight ordinance was defeated by a significant majority of those in attendance.

The Board of Selectmen is grateful to those who took the time out of their Tuesday night to attend and vote their point of view.

## Neighbors Convince BOS To Drop Properties Sales

At a public hearing July 30th, neighbors in the Kickapoo Road and Cedar Road regions expressed nearly unanimous opposition to the potential sale of bundled, town owned and residentially zoned properties. Approximately 75 residents attended, with over 29 vocalizing their disagreement with the proposal.

As a result, at the August 5th Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting the BOS voted to terminate the further pursuit of these grouped property sales. The proposal was also removed from consideration at the August 20th Town meeting.

A number of parcels along Kickapoo Road had been combined and appraised to potentially become 9 buildable lots. Sentiments from neighbors were that additional development up Kickapoo Rod would lead to multiple problems downhill and towards Beseck Lake. Additionally, residents expressed a desire to have the properties remain as natural, vacant space.

Neighbors said that development of a 16-acre parcel west of Sugarloaf Terrace was problematic because potential, additional runoff from the plots would exacerbate the already serious flooding in the wetland to the west. Several suggestions were made to limit any development on this parcel to additional senior housing.

The BOS was very grateful for the significant turnout at the public hearing.

# Personal Property Declarations – Due Nov. 1st

If you are engaged in a business enterprise or commercial farming activity, own horses or unregistered motor vehicles you likely own taxable personal property.

Owners of taxable personal property in the Town of Middlefield must file a personal property declaration in the Assessor's Office **on or before November 1, 2024**.

Examples of personal property include, but is not limited to, all furniture, fixtures, tools, machinery and equipment of commercial and industrial businesses, as well as unregistered motor vehicles, horses and farm machinery owned by them on the 1st day of October.

Tax exemptions are available on Newly Acquired Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment and of certain Commercial Trucks in excess of 26,000-lbs gross weight used exclusively for the transportation of freight for hire and trucks over 55,000-lbs. Failure to declare results in a 25% assessment penalty.

Declarations will be mailed to all known owners of Personal Property located in the Town of Middlefield and Village of Rockfall. Declaration forms and exemption applications will be available at the Middlefield Assessor's Office on October 1st. Please contact the Assessor's office at 860-349-7111 if you need assistance in filing these forms.

## Personal Property Definitions

### Owned Personal Property

The Declaration shall include a complete and accurate description of all personal property used in the conduct of your business as of October 1st. Examples of Personal Property that must be listed on the Declaration includes (but is not limited to):

- All types of office furniture and fixtures
- Tools and equipment
- All industrial machinery and equipment
- Horses and ponies
- Farm machinery and equipment
- Mechanics tools
- Vending Machines
- Signs, billboards
- Computers and other electronic data processing equipment (such as photocopiers, telephone systems, fax machines, etc.)
- Supplies (paper, pens, toner, cleaning supplies, packaging materials, etc.)
- Off-road vehicles (i.e., Construction equipment)
- Carpenters' tools and equipment (including ladders, compressors, etc.)
- Leasehold improvements (other than realty), leased equipment, etc.
- Commercial fishing apparatus

### Leased Personal Property

With special reference to leased personal property, state statute requires that anyone leasing personal property must declare to the Assessor's Office

(no later than November 1st or the Monday following if November 1 falls on a Saturday or Sunday (CGS §12-42), all personal property that is in their possession (on October 1st) that may be leased, borrowed, loaned, stored or consigned. Failure on the part of any person or entity to file such report (in the form and manner as prescribed by law) shall result in a presumption that such personal property is owned by the person or entity possessing it and that person will be assessed any subsequent penalties and tax liability for failure to file.



Typical examples of such personal property that is leased include (but is not limited to):

Dumpsters	Display stand or cases
Computers	Display coolers
Vending machines	Cash Registers / POS Systems
Video machines	Telephones and phone systems
Water coolers	Gas or propane tanks
Coffee machines	Postage meters
Computers	ATM's

### Who is required to file a Personal Property Declaration?

- Any Business owner or business;
- Any farmer;
- Any owner of a horse, pony, horses or ponies;
- Any owner of an unregistered motor vehicle;
- Any owner of an out-of-state registered motor vehicle that is operated in Middlefield.

### What must be declared to the Assessor's Office?

All personal property items used (full or part-time) in the conduct of the business including items donated, given to you or owned prior to starting your business, unregistered motor vehicles, horses, ponies, or out-of-state registered motor vehicle(s) that are operated in Middlefield.

**Detailed information** and answers to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Personal Property Declaration and Assessment are available on the Assessor's page at [www.middlefieldct.org](http://www.middlefieldct.org).

Scan here for Detailed Personal Property Information and FAQs



## Sign up for Middlefield's Property Alert Service

~ Tonya Hogan, Town Clerk, at 860-349-7116.

This service is the first step in protecting your property. Unfortunately, property and mortgage fraud is a fast growing crime in our country. Scammers record fraudulent documents - like fake deeds - or record fake liens - against property owners. In some cases, fraud on real property is not discovered for years. To address these concerns, and protect one of your most important assets, the Town Clerk's office offers this FREE service to notify you immediately via email whenever a document with your name is recorded on the land records.

Please sign up and protect your property. It's quick, easy and free. Simply follow the steps at [www.recording.middlefieldct.org/PropertyAlert/](http://www.recording.middlefieldct.org/PropertyAlert/).

Scan here for the  
Property Alert Service



## DMYFS Durham Middlefield Youth and Family Services

~ Martin W. Anderson, Ph.D., Chair, Board of Directors, [mwandersonphd@comcast.net](mailto:mwandersonphd@comcast.net), 860-558-0795

(DMYFS) is happy to announce that we are a certified Safe Sitter® site. Safe Sitter® is designed to prepare students to be safe when they're home alone, watching younger siblings, or babysitting. The instructor-led class is filled with fun games and role-playing exercises. In addition, there is a class designed as a refresher course for grandparents. The classes offered:

**Safe Sitter Essentials** is a 5 ½ hour program designed for students in grades 6-8. They will learn safety skills, childcare skills, first aid and rescue skills and life and babysitting business skills.

**Safe Sitter Essentials Extended** – Same as above but with an introduction to CPR.



**Safe@Home** by Safe Sitter® is a 90-minute program designed for students in grades 4-6 to prepare them to be safe when they are home alone.

**Grandparents** – Getting Started will review and teach participants how to provide the best and safest care for their grandchildren. They will also learn the latest information on how to safely care for infants and children and how to manage the behavior of children of all ages, in addition to life-saving skills such as choking rescue, first aid, and injury management.

Training, equipment, and supplies to start this program were provided through a grant from the Coginchaug Valley Educational Foundation. To learn more, contact Claudia White at [Cwhite@dmyfs.org](mailto:Cwhite@dmyfs.org) or go to [www.dmyfs.org](http://www.dmyfs.org) and look under the programs link.

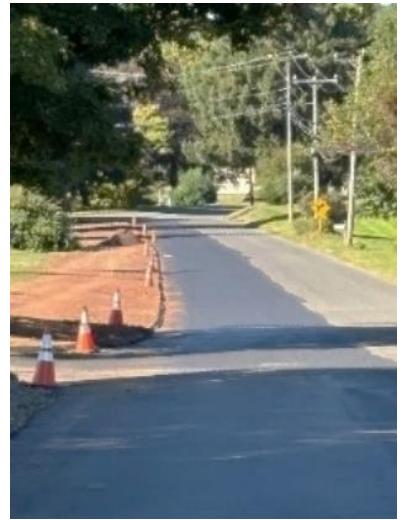
## Public Works

Middlefield Department of Public Works (DPW). Summer is a particularly busy time of year for our public works crew.

Since the beginning of May, the crew has repaired, replaced, or upgraded multiple catch basins and culverts on approximately 6 miles of town roads. In June, these 6 miles of road were shimmed and had the profiles improved using approximately 1,114 tons of asphalt to prep for the chip seal. All of this work was done by the DPW without utilizing outside contractors. This is improvement to almost 20% of our town's 30 miles of roads.

In the beginning of August, 92,407 square yards of chip seal was completed by New England Asphalt Services out of Guilford. We thank folks for being patient and driving at reduced speeds.

Road improvements are also being started on Cherry Hill between Strickland and Laurel Brook Road. We will be utilizing Cahill Excavating for the excavation of approximately 1,000 ft of new drainage pipe and 3 new catch basins from Greenvew to Strickland Road. This new drainage will



improve the quality of the road in this area.

After this project is complete, we will be moving to the Beseck Lake area to start prepping some of the roads for chip sealing that will probably happen in the spring of 2025. Ongoing maintenance such as sweeping, basin repairs and mowing are still ongoing even as we focus on these major repairs.

Our new road sweeper has been used quite a bit to this date. It has worked as well, if not better than our previous machine. It's very versatile and easy to run. There was a huge estimated cost savings of \$60,000 - \$70,000 dollars in purchasing this equipment ahead of schedule. Thanks to all who approved this purchase at town meeting.



Please drive safely around construction zones. These are our neighbors, friends, and employees trying to make our town better. Let them go home safe.

## Beseck Lake - Treatment Date is Sept 16 for Blue-Green Algae Cyanobacteria

Due to rains, warmer weather, and a spike in the phosphorus levels, Beseck Lake has been experiencing Blue-green algae blooms with Cyanobacteria threat levels that can produce potential toxins.

A blue-green algae bloom closed the swim area of the beach Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup> for a day due to cyanobacteria toxin risk.

Blue-green algae blooms are harmful when they produce toxins that can make humans and animals sick.

All Habitat Services, the Beseck Lake water management company, is going to treat the water for effective control of the cyanobacteria algae species.

Permit for this effort is approved and issued by DEEP.

The cyanobacteria will be treated using a combination of Green Clean 5.0 (Hydrogen Peroxide) a liquid form of the product, and Green Clean PRO (Sodium Carbonate Peroxyhydrate) a granular form of the product. The primary treatment will be using Green Clean 5.0 (liquid form) a contact product that immediately controls floating surface mats of both planktonic and filamentous algae. It will be applied sub surface.

In accordance to the budget for this year the maximum treatment area will be 30 acres. The primary treatment area is targeted at the Middlefield Town Beach and areas north and south of the beach along the western shore.

### Key Benefits:

- Fast acting, kills algae on contact
- No use restrictions
- No runoff restrictions
- Broad-spectrum algae control
- Safe for swimmers, pets, fish, and waterfowl



For any questions, contact Richard Santos at: [Beseck.Lake.EC@middlefieldct.org](mailto:Beseck.Lake.EC@middlefieldct.org)

## Land Use/Building Dept

Fall is around the corner. If you haven't changed the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in more than a year, now would be a good time to do so. We also recommend having your heating system serviced and cleaned annually by a licensed professional. Also, if you haven't had your chimney cleaned in a while, it's always a good idea to have a professional chimney cleaner look at it.

If you have any questions on your building projects, please don't hesitate to contact the Building Department.

## Zoning Enforcement Procedures

The Town of Middlefield, Land Use Department is charged with the enforcement of the Zoning Regulations. This means anything that is contained within the Zoning Regulations is enforced through our office. Many times, Zoning is confused with items such as Blight, Noise, overgrown grass or weeds, general property maintenance and trash, etc. These items are not Zoning violations. The Town of Middlefield has a Zoning Enforcement Policy which follows the requirements set forth in Connecticut General Statute as to how a complaint is investigated, timeframes for compliance and appeal procedures.



**Goals:** It is the goal of the Land Use Office to help residents and businesses get the required approvals for activities they wish to perform and to help them resolve any violations that may be discovered on their property. These enforcement guidelines are designed to give the violator ample time to correct the violations and are compliance-based, rather than penalty-based. If the landowner fails to cooperate, enforcement options may be utilized following the outline given below, giving due deference to individual extenuating circumstances.

**Filing of a Complaint:** The Town's enforcement policy is largely complaint-driven, though violations observed by the ZEO (Zoning Enforcement Official) or WEO (Wetlands Enforcement Official) need not await the filing of a complaint. Although some residents wish to complain anonymously, we generally don't follow up on anonymous complaints as often these result in claims of unfair or uneven enforcement. Furthermore, without a valid complaint, it is harder for the Town to investigate complaints as there is no probable cause to initiate searches (obtain warrants) where owners are not being cooperative. Therefore, all complaints must be made on the Town's complaint form or via email to the appropriate enforcement official. Complaints that are found to be valid start a process to gain compliance.

### Enforcement Priorities

1. Violations that pose immediate danger to the public health and safety of the community;
2. Violations related to development projects that are in the construction phase;
3. Proactive enforcement programs initiated by the Commission;
4. Reactive or complaint-based enforcement;
5. Violations observed during Zoning Certificate of Compliance (ZCC) inspections.

# Senior & Social Services

Please contact Sue D'Orvilliers  
to schedule an appointment,  
register for a program,  
or to find out more information.

860-349-7121 ~ [sdorvilliers@middlefieldct.org](mailto:sdorvilliers@middlefieldct.org)

## **Do you get the monthly newsletter?**

 Want to know about all the activities that happen monthly at the Senior Center? Want one sent to your home?

We can easily add you to our email list or regular mail. We will never share your contact information.

**Energy Assistance:** The Senior & Social Services Department will begin taking applications for Energy Assistance for the 2025 season in September. This program is designed to financially assist anyone in our community, based on income qualifications, with their fuel needs. Please call to schedule an appointment.

## **Medicare Boot Camp:**

Tuesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m. @ Senior Lounge.

Are you turning 65 this year or in the near future? Then this is the program for you! Join us for this free educational seminar



You will learn: When to enroll to avoid penalties. What is part A, B, C, & D? The differences between Medicare Savings plans and traditional Supplemental/Medigap Plans. How and when to enroll and who are your trusted resources. Presented by Senior Resources on Aging. Register at 860-349-7121.

## **Fabric Swap:**

Saturday, November 2, 2024 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. @ Community Center

Trade your stash! Join us for our annual Fabric Swap. Have a stash of fabric or notions that you would like to swap? This is the place! Our annual Fabric Swap is a great place to get new material or trade in material that you may not need.

## **Friendsgiving:**

Wednesday, November 20, 2024 @ Senior Café.

A Special Luncheon held to celebrate the friendships that we share and make at our lunches. This is a reservation luncheon and menu is supplemented by those attending.

**NEW FITNESS PROGRAM - Registration required.**



## **Chair Yoga:**

Tuesday, September 17, 10:45 a.m. @ Senior Lounge

Improve your flexibility, reduce stress, improve balance and posture, improve digestion, strengthen legs, calves, ankles, feet and upper body.



## **Join us for all of these Lunch & Learns.**

Please call the office to register, 860-349-7121.

## **Don't Be Fooled (by Fraud):**

Monday, September 16, 2024 1:00 P.M. @ Senior Café.

Join us for lunch and stay for the program. Sponsored by Liberty Bank. This program raises awareness among older adults and their caregivers on how to prevent fraud, scams, and other elder financial exploitation. It also encourages advanced planning and informed financial decision-making to be prepared and protected from Fraudsters. Call to register.

## **Diabetes Education Workshop:**

Wednesday, September 18. 11:00 a.m.-noon

Informative workshop Q & A for anyone who has Diabetes or others with questions. Sponsored by our South Central Health District and led by diabetes educators. Call to register.

## **Live Your Best Life Now!**

Wednesday, October 16, 1:00 p.m.

This presentation will lead us through how to empower our health café choices and maintain our independence. Sponsored by Middlesex Health. Call to register.

## **Blood Pressure Clinic**

Wednesday, September 18, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. @ Community Center.

Held monthly, this service is provided by the South-Central Health District.

# Conservation Commission

## Coe Hill Property (School Street) Report

In early July members of the Conservation Commission joined DEEP Forestry and Wildlife Division staff on a site walk of the Coe Hill Property. Subsequently, a comprehensive report on the status of the property was compiled by the forester. The following is a summary of their findings and recommendations. For access to the full report, please visit the town's website where a copy has been made available.



The 38-acre property is a mix of forest and shrubland that was once an orchard. The town's primary goals for this property include improving forest health, enhancing wildlife habitat, controlling invasive

species, and supporting public recreation.

The report highlighted significant challenges, particularly, the dominance of invasive plant species, which threaten the growth of native trees and shrubs. The forest's current state creates insufficient conditions for regrowth and underscores the need for active management to restore a healthy, resilient ecosystem.

Wildlife habitat and food sources are already present on the property, but the report emphasizes the need for improved management to restore the habitat these species need in order to thrive. Additionally, the presence of standing dead and downed trees offers critical habitat for various animal species.

Finally, the report recommends a cautious approach to trail development to minimize the spread of invasive species and to protect sensitive habitats. It also suggests controlling deer populations with increased hunting, as they hinder the growth of native plants. The overall recommendations aim to balance conservation efforts with public access, ensuring long-term ecological health and sustainability.

Members of the Conservation Commission along with the Board of Selectmen are looking forward to making progress on improvements to the Coe Hill property. The next steps in this project will include the development of a management plan by a forester, which will be crucial to the success of this long term project.

Scan here for the  
Coe Hill Forest Report  
(go to bottom of the page)



## Beseck Lake Environment Committee Update

Good news for Beseck Lake. The plant survey by the Office of Aquatic Invasive Species (OAIS) showed that the herbicide treatment done in 2023 was successful in eradicating the invasive Eurasian Milfoil from the Lake!



Currently, the Environment Committee, working with All Habitat Services (our Lake Management Company), has started a proactive program to reduce the phosphorus entering the Lake from the watershed.

The introduction of foreign nutrient sources, like fertilizers, grass clippings, leaves, animal waste, disposal into the storm drains, and eroded sediment can spur the growth of nuisance plants and algae blooms.

These nutrients flow from the watershed thru 4 culverts into the Lake.

All Habitat Services has installed filters in the 4 culverts. The filters are called EutroSORB filters. They capture and bind phosphorus in the filter. The filters reduce the phosphorus flowing through the culverts that then builds up in our lake.

This can mean less algae growth. The filters are a proactive way to manage the nutrients before they enter Beseck Lake.

The filter ingredients are safe to aquatic life, do not dissolve, and are removed from the environment when the filter has met its capacity. All Habitat will be removing and replacing the filters monthly.

The permit for this effort has been approved and issued by DEEP.

The Environment Committee is hoping to start seeing our phosphorus levels stabilize and go lower in future water surveys!

--Rick Santos

# Middlefield Volunteer Fire Co.

There were 209 Calls for Service between January 1 and August 23, 2024.

- Fires – 21
- Rescue & EMS – 130
- Hazardous Conditions (no fire) – 21
- Service Calls – 15
- Good Intent Calls – 13
- False Alarms – 9

## Grant Award – Turnout Gear

The Middlefield Volunteer Fire Company is thrilled to announce that we have been awarded a grant from FEMA through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program for \$79,142. This funding will be utilized for the replacement of crucial turnout gear and personal protective equipment, ensuring that our dedicated firefighters have the latest and most effective tools to safeguard themselves while serving our community. This grant not only enhances the safety and efficiency of our fire response but also reflects FEMA's commitment to supporting local firefighting efforts. We are grateful for this vital support and excited about the positive impact it will have on our operations and savings to our taxpayers!



## 90th Anniversary

The Middlefield Vol. Fire Company is celebrating our 90th Anniversary! The Charter Members of our Fire



Company met in April of 1934 for the first time as a recognized organization. Although many aspects of the fire service have evolved since that day, we work to keep our traditions intact. Earlier this month we hosted our mutual aid partners to celebrate 90 years of volunteer

service to the town of Middlefield. As part of this celebration, we officially welcomed our two new pieces of apparatus. This is known in the fire service as a wet down. The wet down of apparatus is a tradition where neighboring fire companies spray the apparatus with water as we push it into our firehouse. The tradition is intended to "bless" or dedicate the firetruck to years of safe service to the community. (See the pictures on the front cover.)

You can purchase 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary t-shirts online at [middlefieldfirect.org/store](http://middlefieldfirect.org/store).

## Drone Acquisition

We are excited to announce the recent acquisition of a Skydio X10 drone, made possible through generous donations from our community. This



advanced technology will significantly enhance our fire rescue capabilities by providing real-time aerial views, improving search and rescue operations, and aiding in incident assessment and management. To ensure optimal use, five members of our drone team have completed or are in the process of completing FAA certification and specialized flight training. The addition of this drone will greatly boost our ability to respond effectively and safely during emergencies, reinforcing our commitment to protecting and serving our community.

## Middlefield Welcomes Six New Members!

We are thrilled to welcome six new members who have begun their company level training.

David Olszewski joins us after recently moving to town from Durham. David is also a full-time career firefighter in Guilford, and brings all of his training and experience.

We have five members who have begun their Firefighter I Certification training, which will provide them with the foundation for all their firefighting skills during more than 200 hours of training. Owen Bentley, Ethan Bufford-Cournoyer, Rob Diaz-Leon, Bryan Hofferd, and Gabby Weronik come from various backgrounds and each of them brings their own set of experiences to our fire company.

Interested in learning out you can get involved? Visit our website for more information!

Click the link below or scan the QR code to learn more!

<https://sl8.link/OmhqQjVDRXmfOIY5-02Syw>



# Congratulations Graduates!

*Middlefield and Rockfall Students of the Coginchaug High School Class of 2024 ~ June 12, 2024*

Micah Stephen Ackerman  
Samantha Leona Anderson  
Ryan Elizabeth Atwell  
Cali Mia Beebe  
Logan Michael Bender  
Brooklyn Gianni-Savannah Caraballo  
John Michael Carafeno  
Justin Robert Chapman  
John Coady  
Katherine Joy Colwell  
Killian Francis Conway  
Taylor Marilyn Cooney  
Faith Alexandra Corona \*Tiana Rose DiLeone \*†  
Carter Maurice Fudge \*#  
Charlotte Mae Garrett  
Arianna Shea Hart  
Norah LeMoyne Healy \*†  
Paige Ann Jackson  
Paige Mary Konopka ††#  
Serra Oriana LeDuc \*  
Jason Michael Letourneau \*  
Lilliana Belle Mach \*†  
Julia Ann Marino-Sekoll  
Claire Kathleen Overton \*†  
Devan Amit Patel \*  
Diya Dhaval Patel \*†  
Corey Aiden Quincy  
Jared Rawls  
Justin Mathew Rowe \*  
Nicholas Donald Smith ††#  
Sawyer Ann Stone \*  
Logan William Watts  
Ian Weissberg ††#  
Gabrielle Elizabeth Weronik  
Marley Wood

\* Honors with Distinction Graduate

† Honors Graduate

‡ National Honor Society Member

# Honors and Distinction Community Service Hours

Valedictorian – Diya Patel

Salutatorian – Claire Overton



## Levi Coe Library

The Levi Coe Library is NOT your Grandmother's library. Sure, we have all of the newest books in print, audio and digital formats along with movies but did you know we offer so much more? We have:

- Museum passes for free or reduced admission to the Beardsley Zoo, Florence Griswold Museum, New Britain Museum of American Art, Wadsworth Atheneum, New Haven Museum, CT Science Center, CT's Old State House and the state parks.
- Yard games: Kan Jam, Cornhole, Pickleball, giant Connect Four, Ladder Ball, and 15 others.
- More than 20 cake pans to borrow.
- Hiking kits with binoculars and field guides.
- Travel games kits for those long vacation car rides.
- Over 80 puzzles.
- Plant propagation station to trade cuttings.
- Wonderbooks & Playaway Launchpads.
- eMagazines in addition to eBooks and eAudio via Libby.
- Collection receptacles for used eyeglasses for the Lions Club and retired flags for the Boy Scouts.
- Homebound delivery service – we bring the library to you!
- Free notary services.

So many programs... last year we held 239 programs with nearly 4,000 people participating.

ROOM RENTAL - DID YOU ALSO KNOW that Library Hall, our community room, can be rented for private parties for only \$100? The room can accommodate 50 people and has access to a kitchen, bathroom, tables and chairs and parking. We even had a wedding that was held in our beautiful Heartstone labyrinth and Shakespeare garden.

As a Middlefield or Rockfall resident, you can have access to all of these services when you have a library card. Stop by the library Monday-Thursday, 10-7pm and Saturday, 10-2pm to get your card.

Follow us on [www.leviecoe.com](http://www.leviecoe.com) Facebook, Instagram, and for our upcoming news and program announcements.

Visit us at the coffee booth at the Durham Fair!



## American Flag Retirement Drop Box

What do you do with it when it's old and ratty? Don't just throw it in the trash - that's considered disrespectful. Just as there's etiquette for displaying it, there's also etiquette for disposing of flags in a dignified manner.

Retired flags can be placed in the drop box at the Town Hall and the Community Center. The beautiful boxes which were a 2019 Eagle Scout project from Nick Planeta. The flags are then collected to be respectfully disposed of.

# Recent Businesses in Town

**The NEW Middlefield Pizza Restaurant** - Have you tried the restaurant in which is now under new ownership? It opened February 19<sup>th</sup> in Middlefield center



by the new owner, George Sapounas. There is a full menu of appetizers, wings, salads, grinders, pizza, dinners, fish/chips, clams, burgers, gyros, and a child menu. The dining room also has

been renovated and is now full service with a waitstaff.

George previously owned a similar restaurant in Farmington, but relocated because he loved the small town feeling of Middlefield, and enjoys all the wonderful and friendly people!

Stop by and visit at 480 Main Street. Orders can be placed at 860-349-1117, or 860-349-1534.

## Emily's Sweets Reopens Pastry Offerings at Baileyville Bakeshop -

Emily Redmond has reopened her pastry shop, JUST SOMETHING SWEET, at 271 Baileyville Road (corner of Baileyville and Lake Road)

following a fire which had forced closure and reconditioning. Emily is following a pastry tradition at this location. It earlier was the Kim's Cottage Confections, prior to Kim Bowman Terrill's retirement and the closure of her business.



"Just Something Sweet by Emily" is a bakery and cafe that serves from scratch breakfast pastries, baked goods, desserts, and custom cakes for every occasion! Her business is open Tuesday through Sunday.

**Rich Farm Ice Cream** - We all scream for ice cream, and now Middlefield has another great spot to enjoy some of the best around!

Rich Farm Ice Cream Middlefield, which has been open for just about a year, officially held a ribbon cutting and celebration to mark their entry and commitment to the community. According to owner James Serra, they use an all natural ice cream mix that does not include corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, growth hormones, or other chemicals. They offer dozens of freshly-made flavors that range from the standard vanilla and chocolate to more wild creations like Razzmanian Devil, Bananas

Foster and Cowabunga!

During the brief ceremony, Rep. Fishbein presented an official State Citation signed by the entire Middlefield delegation to the Serra family.



The Middlefield location is 1 Lorraine Terrace, at the intersection of Washington St/Rt 66, and is open on Sunday 12:00-6:00P, and Monday-Saturday 12:00-8:00P. Their hours may differ during holidays.

## Durham/Middlefield Giving Garden

Recently, six Monarch butterflies were released into the Pollinator Patch at the Giving garden (thanks to Judi Rand).

It was a beautiful and encouraging sight to watch them cling to the blossoms as they feed and warmed themselves.

The gardening season is quickly coming to a close. The volunteers have spent many busy mornings planting, weeding, and harvesting vegetables and flowers for the Senior facilities in both towns. However, it's not all work and no play but also a place to socialize and share a craft or two.



It has been a successful year despite the invasion of a woodchuck family of eight and various bunnies who found the green beans irresistible!

Thank you to our valuable new members and those who have been with us from the first ground breaking. Looking forward to season #7.

# Park & Recreation

## Trunk-or-Treat

Our 8th annual Trunk or Treat will take place on **Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, from 2-4pm**. Trunks must be parked by 1:20pm.

Entry to the event is free however we will be collecting hygiene items such as shampoo, conditioner, tooth paste, sanitary pads, shaving cream, toilet paper, and soap for the Middlefield food pantry.

**Trunks are needed** so please reach out to [parkrec@middlefieldct.org](mailto:parkrec@middlefieldct.org) if you would like to participate as a trunk. The first 20 cars that register will be given 100 pieces of candy as a "thank you" for your generous participation. We will also have a TRUNK contest. \$25 for the Cutest Car. \$25 for the Most Creative. \$25 for the Scariest. \$50 for the People's Choice car!

## Tree Lighting Ceremony

Our Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place on **Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**. The ceremony will begin at 5:30 with caroling on the Town Green. Santa will arrive at 6:00 to help light the tree. Santa will stick around after to hear holiday wishes from our guests.

# Resident State Troopers

911 • 860-349-9685 • [police@middlefieldct.org](mailto:police@middlefieldct.org)



**DEA NATIONAL RX TAKEBACK**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 10a-2p**

**Resident Troopers Office**  
**Middlefield Community Center**

Prescription and over-the-counter medications may be disposed of, including:

- Capsules, Creams,
- Inhalers, Non-aerosol sprays,
- Ointments, Patches,
- Pills, Vials,
- Liquids (must be in their original container).

Pet medications are also accepted.

# MIDDLEFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S OPEN HOUSE

**The Middlefield Historical Society invites you to an Open House at the *Historical Society Museum*.**

**The museum has been newly organized with displays featuring the history of Middlefield. There's something for everyone!**



Middlefield Historical Society

**Date:**

**Saturday, October 19, 2024**



**Time:**

**11:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**Location:**

**405 Main Street, Middlefield Community Center, upper level.**

# Vaccination Clinics



The two clinics are provided by Stop & Shop and will include the following: High Dose Flu, Standard Flu, Pneumonia, Shingles, RSV, COVID Booster.

**Wednesday, 10/2/24, 12:00p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday, 11/6/24, 10:00a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Both clinics are held at the Community Center, 405 Main Street, upper level.

# The Middlefield Cemetery Association

The Association is running a "sale" on gravesites. Currently, they are \$1500, and will go up to \$1800 come January 1, 2025.

They also have a new area specifically designated for pets.

For all the particulars please contact Ken Twombly at [middlefieldcemetaryassociation@gmail.com](mailto:middlefieldcemetaryassociation@gmail.com), or 860-301-0385. [www.middlefieldcemetary.org](http://www.middlefieldcemetary.org)

# 2024 Ballot Questions

*The following questions will appear on the ballot in the November election.*

## ATTENTION!

**The Town Charter Revisions Need Approval in November Election!**

*Be sure to vote.*

## 3 Charter Revision Questions

Last November, the Charter changes in the electoral process for the Tax Collector and the Town Clerk were soundly defeated off the table. Those ideas were dropped. A new Charter Revision Group was gathered and charged with identifying other areas of the Charter that require consideration. There were two (2) public hearings on this topic as required by state statute for the town residents to attend on this topic of revision. This year we are offering voters a chance to weigh in on revisions of three (3) individual items in the Charter.

**1. "Shall the proposed amendment to Section 605 removing the requirement that members of the boards and commissions not serve more than three (3) consecutive terms, be adopted?"**

Explanatory language: Many of the seasoned members of boards and commissions have invaluable experience and knowledge of the workings of their group. Some of them would like to continue their service beyond the current limits. Their enthusiasm and interest help to maintain continuity and can prevent extended vacancies that occur when there is a lack of residents volunteering their services because of the busy schedules, activities and obligations.

It is essential to know that the Board of Selectmen is required to reappoint the members each time their terms end.

*Voting YES* would enable a member to extend their term of service. *Voting NO* would limit a member to 3 terms.

**2. "Shall the proposed amendment to Section 205 of the Charter be adopted extending the time period for replacement for a member of the Board of Selectmen, in the event of a vacancy on the board, from 30 to 45 days?"**

Explanatory language: Replacing the essential position of Board of Selectman in the short time of 30 days is challenging to accomplish. Several months (Jan., Feb., May, July, Sept., Nov., and Dec.) have national and religious holidays which actually decrease the time to make this most critical and comprehensive decision. The extra couple of weeks can ease the transition considerably, yet still fills the need for expediency.

**3. "Shall all other of the proposed amendments to the Charter, primarily including corrections to grammar, punctuation and updates reflecting changes in state statutes be adopted?"**

Explanatory language: The last time the charter was revised was a little over 30 years ago. Since then, there are some recommended changes to bring the document up to date with changes in state statutes. Many others are to correct punctuation and grammatical errors that exist in the current charter.

**Use the QR Code to Review the Town Charter with the proposed changes, or go to [middlefieldct.org](http://middlefieldct.org)**



## RSD13 Bond Question

**"Shall Regional School District No. 13, comprised of the Towns of Durham and Middlefield, appropriate \$76,130,000 for the expansion and renovation of Memorial School in Middlefield into a Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5 school and authorize the issuance of bonds, notes or temporary notes in an amount not to exceed \$39,000,000 to finance the appropriation, or so much as may be necessary after deducting grants to be received for the project?"**

*Voting YES* approves the resolution, *NO* opposes.

(Check the website in October for more information or sign up for updates at [www.middlefieldct.org](http://www.middlefieldct.org).)

## No Excuse Ballot for Early Voting

**"Shall the Constitution of the State be amended to permit the General Assembly to allow each voter to vote by absentee ballot?"**

Explanatory language: Under the current state constitution, qualified voters may cast an absentee vote only if they are unable to vote in person at their polling place on election day due to, 1) absence from their city or town; 2) sickness or physical disability; or 3) their religious beliefs prohibiting secular activity on a day.

*If this amendment is approved, the state constitution would no longer limit the reasons why absentee voting may be used.*

Therefore, it would expand the state legislature's authority to pass laws regarding voting by qualified voters who will not appear at their polling place on election day.

# NOTES from the Registrars of Voters



## ATTENTION VOTERS!

**The PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WILL be held at MIDDLEFIELD MEMORIAL SCHOOL on Hubbard Street on Election Day, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024!**

### REMINDER:

**Elections are held in a neutral space.** Election Officials work together to provide a peaceful environment for electors to cast votes.

We remind citizens that wearing hats, pins, patriotic colors or apparel symbolic of one's party **are permitted**.

The names and images of candidates on the Ballot are **not permitted** within the marked perimeter of the Polls. Please be respectful to all Electors and to our national Electoral Right and Rite.

### ***INACTIVE VOTERS:***

People who have been discouraged by the electoral process and felt that their vote has not counted or mattered; if this is the year that you would like to reregister, we welcome you back to the Polls!

### ***CHECK A REGISTRATION:***

If you would like to vote in the Presidential Election and have not voted in recent elections, or are not sure if you are registered, you can call the Registrars at **860-349-7119**, or check online at the Secretary of State's website: <https://portaldir.ct.gov/sots/LookUp.aspx>

### ***REGISTER TO VOTE:***

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, ***we strongly encourage you*** to beat the Election Day rush and not wait in lines.

Blank Registration Cards are available at the Levi E. Coe Library; the Town Clerk's office; at the Registrars' office within the Community Center, and on its exterior bulletin board when we are closed. They can be mailed or easily dropped off, even slipped under our door!

### ***UPDATE REGISTRATIONS:***

***Registrars inherently preserve and secure citizens' right to vote!***

Every year CT Registrars conduct a canvass of voters that cross-checks with other towns and States to secure accuracy of our records. Sons and daughters leave the nest; elderly move to easier environments, Military personnel have had to move quickly, and their records may still be on file. If you have family members or friends who have moved, please inform them that ***a letter or postcard with their dated signature***, will enable Registrars to maintain tidy files. A simple, inexpensive USPS postcard will do. This is our address:

**REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
405 MAIN ST., MIDDLEFIELD, CT 06455**

**860-349-7119 ~ [www.middlefieldct.org](http://www.middlefieldct.org)**

## IN PERSON VOTING CALENDAR 2024

OCT 18	<b>DEADLINE FOR VOTER REGISTRATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by mail to be post-marked.</li> <li>• at the DMV, by close of business.</li> <li>• online, at <a href="http://www.myvote.ct.gov">www.myvote.ct.gov</a>, by 11:59 PM.</li> <li>• in person at the Community Center, by 8:00 PM.</li> </ul>		
	EARLY VOTING	IN PERSON SAME DAY REGISTRATION	CURBSIDE VOTING
	Community Center Room 1	Community Center Room 4	Community Center Call 860-349-7119
21	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
22	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
23	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
24	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
25	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
26	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
27	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
28	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
29*	8a-8p	8a-8p	8a-8p
30	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
31*	8a-8p	8a-8p	8a-8p
NOV 1	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
2	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
3	10a-6p	10a-6p	10a-6p
4	---	---	---
Tues 5	ELECTION DAY POLLS	IN PERSON SAME DAY REGISTRATION	CURBSIDE VOTING
	Middlefield Memorial School	Community Center Room 5	Middlefield Memorial School
	6a-8p	6a-8p <b>Register BEFORE going to the polls.</b>	6a-8p

\* Extended hours.

## ABSENTEE VOTING

**REGISTERED VOTERS CAN VOTE ABSENTEE** if you are prevented from voting in-person because of DISABILITY or SICKNESS or because you'll be Out of Town on Election Day.

Apply in-Person with the Town Clerk, or ONLINE with your CT drivers license at [www.MYVOTE.CT.gov/getmyab](http://www.MYVOTE.CT.gov/getmyab)



1. Wait for the ballot to come in the mail
2. Complete the ballot following the instructions
3. Mail the ballot in the provided envelope to the Town Clerk, or use the Secure Absentee Ballot Drop Box in front of the Town Hall.

## Sign Up to Receive Important Election Updates via Text and/or Email

1. Sign up on the town's website - go to [www.middlefield.org](http://www.middlefield.org)
2. On the darker band toward the bottom, click on "Notify Me®"
3. Sign up/log in
4. Go down to "News Flash", and next to "Register of Voter" select email and/or text
5. To stay informed with town news, sign up for other notifications

## GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 5th AT MEMORIAL SCHOOL

*This preview of who and what is on the ballot is to help voters make voting this year's very long ballot easier. Copies of the actual Ballot will be posted on the Town Website and at the Registrars and Town Clerk offices when it becomes available in October!*

### Major Ballot Nominees:

<b>President</b>	Donald Trump Kamala Harris Jill Stein Chase Oliver	Republican Democratic Green Libertarian
<b>Vice President</b>	J. D. Vance Tim Walz Butch Ware Mike Ter Maat	Republican Democratic Green Libertarian
<b>US Senator</b>	Christopher Murphy Matthew M. Corey	Democratic Republican
<b>US Representative</b>	Rosa DeLauro Michael Massey	Democratic Republican
<b>CT District 12 Senate</b>	Christine Cohen Paul Crisci	Democratic Republican
<b>CT District 13 Senate</b>	Jan Hochadel Elain Cariati	Democratic Republican
<b>CT District 90 Representative</b>	Craig Fishbein Rebecca Hyland	Republican Democratic
<b>Judge of Probate Vacancy</b>	Phrances Leverton Szewczyk	Democratic

### 5 Questions:

#### **No Excuse Ballot for Early Voting**

*Information regarding this question will be published on the Town website in October. Sign up (see above) for automatic updates.*

#### **3 Charter Revision Questions**

*Information regarding this question is contained in this newsletter.*

#### **Yes/No RSD-13 Bond Question**

*Information regarding this question will be published on the Town website in October. Sign up (see above) for automatic updates.*



PRSR STD  
ECRWSS  
U.S.POITAGE  
PAID  
EDDM Retail

**LOCAL POSTAL  
CUSTOMER**

## **TOWN HALL**

393 Jackson Hill Road / P.O. Box 179  
Middlefield, CT 06455

**Robert C. Yamartino** – *First Selectman*

**Carol Bufithis** – *Selectwoman*

**Jim Irish** – *Selectman*

**Judi Rand** – *Executive Assistant*

**Al Rusilowicz** – *Finance Director*

**Mary Ann Zieminski** – *Treasurer*

**Tyna Kollar** – *Accounts Payable*

**Pam Deziel** – *Assessor*

**Anne Olszewski** – *Tax Collector*

**Tonya Hogan** – *Town Clerk*

**Kim Garvis** – *Assistant Town Clerk*

**Jason Wickham** – *Public Works Supervisor*

**Bruce Villwock** – *Tree Warden*

**David Chowaniec** – *Animal Control Officer*

## **MIDDLEFIELD COMMUNITY CENTER**

405 Main Street  
Middlefield, CT 06455

**Bill DeMatteo** – *Building Official*

**Ed Diamond** – *Building Inspector*

**Nancy Davidson** – *Land Use Assistant*

**Randy Bernotas** – *Inland Wetlands Agent*

**Robin Newton** – *Town Planner*

**Zoe Chatfield** – *Zoning Enforcement Officer*

**Hannah Malcolm** – *Park & Recreation*

**Anne Malcolm** – *Registrar of Voters (D)*

**Janine Skelps** – *Registrar of Voters (R)*

**Susan D'Orvilliers** – *Senior & Social Services*

**Rob Poturnicki** – *Emergency Management,  
Facilities Manager, WPCA*

**TFC Christopher Valenti** – *Resident State Trooper*  
**TPR Caleb Stevens** – *Resident State Trooper*

## **MIDDLEFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.**

406 Jackson Hill Road

Middlefield, CT 06455

860-348-7124 / [www.middlefieldfirect.org](http://www.middlefieldfirect.org)

**Peter Tyc** – *Chief*

**Steven Tyc** – *Deputy Chief*

**Jeffrey DiCostanzo** – *Assistant Chief*

## **TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD**

393 Jackson Hill Rd.

P.O. Box 179

Middlefield, CT 06455

860-349-7114

[www.middlefieldct.org](http://www.middlefieldct.org)



Facebook

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

<b>Oct 2</b>	<b>VACCINE CLINIC</b> <i>Middlefield Community Center</i>
<b>Oct 19</b>	<b>OPEN HOUSE</b> <b>MIDDLEFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY</b> <i>Middlefield Community Center</i>
<b>Oct 28</b>	<b>DRUG TAKE BACK</b> <i>Middlefield Community Center - front</i>
<b>Oct 28</b>	<b>TRUNK OR TREAT</b> <i>Peckham Park</i>
<b>Nov 1</b>	<b>PERSONAL PROPERTY DECLARATIONS --- DEADLINE</b> <i>Assessor's Office</i>
<b>Nov 6</b>	<b>VACCINE CLINIC</b> <i>Middlefield Community Center</i>
<b>Oct 21 thru Nov 3</b>	<b>PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ~ EARLY VOTING ~</b> <i>Middlefield Community Center, Main St.</i>
<b>Nov 5</b>	<b>PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ~ ELECTION DAY ~</b> <i>Middlefield Memorial School, Hubbard St</i>