

# ***Newsletter from the First Selectwoman November, 2012***

*My apologies for the delay in getting this out – 'tis the season for being busy!*

## ***Storm Sandy***



From the beginning, November was destined to be a busy month. After Storm Sandy, there was a great deal to be accomplished. While the rain was essentially non-existent, and the wind caused enough damage to put most of the town out of power (92% at the height of the power loss), it was the flood waters that caused the most damage and long-lasting effects. There were over 277 homes that were deemed uninhabitable immediately following the storm. Over 60 of those homes sustained enough damage to render them unsound, and at least 4 of those must be demolished. The amount of work involved for our Building Dept. to inspect

this number of homes has been incredible, and now, as those homeowners proceed to repair their homes, all our staff working in land use are very busy working with homeowners to recover. There are both seasonal and primary homes that have been damaged, so in some cases, families are now homeless.



But we have tried to do what we can to help. Many of you know that the transfer station was open extra days and hours to accept storm debris at no charge. Town Hall also had extended hours to allow those who could not get in during regular hours to secure the permit more opportunities. And we sponsored "An Evening with FEMA" at Town Hall on Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>. Representatives from FEMA, the Small Business Administration and the Insurance representatives were on hand to meet with individuals and businesses impacted by the storm. For those people, this has probably been an even longer month.

The community of Old Lyme has proven once again that caring and compassion live strong. There are a few families that are currently being helped by organizations and groups in town. Temporary and permanent rents have been secured, help with bedding, clothing, food, and furniture has been given, and emotional support through this catastrophic event has been strong. While you may not be aware of the details of these efforts, it has been ongoing and continues in an effort to reach out to those in need. If you can help in any way, or are still in need of help, I urge you to call either Mary Seidner of LYSB (860-434-7208) or Rev. Mark Robinson (860-434-1621) of St. Ann's Church to offer your assistance.

The Town of Old Lyme will schedule a meeting to review our response in an effort to improve where we can. A big THANK YOU goes out to so many people who helped through this storm, including our First Responders from the Fire Dept, Ambulance, many individuals, as well as the Boy Scouts and Coast Guard cadets. The volunteerism in this town is just amazing! THANK YOU!

## ***Election Day 2012***

As expected, Election Day was very busy at Cross Lane Fire House. This year, we tried something new – the traffic pattern was designated with One-Way signs, and because it we anticipated a large crowd, we made sure that there was a police presence. At one point, we had two officers and one of our Old Lyme Rangers directing traffic. We also installed extra lighting for the day to assure safety for the voters. Most people felt the changes made for a more efficient voting day, though there were still lines at different times during the day. Voter turnout was very high, which is a hallmark of our community. Congratulations to the elected officials – and to the voters for taking this responsibility so seriously.

## ***Wastewater Task Force***

This Task Force, formed by the Board of Selectmen, will look at the issue of Wastewater Management for our shoreline area through a community system. After a cancellation due to the storm, the Wastewater Task Force met for the first time on Nov. 13. As this was the first meeting, it was really an introduction to each other and the history within Old Lyme, the issues at hand, and review of the charge for this Task Force. They set their meeting schedule for the next several months and were given information to go over prior to the next meeting.

## ***Veterans Memorial Dedication***



On Sunday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> at 11 AM, the **American Legion Post 41** and **VFW Post 1467**, both of Old Lyme, dedicated a new Memorial “To All Who Served and Sacrificed So We Could Enjoy Lasting Freedom” at the Duck River Cemetery. The ceremony, attended by many veterans, as well as state and local officials took place on a beautiful, sunny morning in front of the flag pole in the cemetery. By next Memorial Day, it will also have blue stone installed around the memorial to protect it from lawn care equipment. If you have not seen it, stop by and take a look. It is stunning in its simplicity, and the six emblems of the branches of the Armed Services, which are engraved on the top, are impressive. Congratulations to the veterans who worked so hard to make this happen. It is a fitting tribute to those who served so proudly.

## ***Special Town Meeting on Nov. 14***

The Town of Old Lyme now has two additional town roads, thanks to the voters who turned out on Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> for a Special Town Meeting. Both **Village Lane** and **Woodcrest Dr.** were accepted as Town Roads at the meeting. They are each fairly short roads with cul-de-sacs at the end. In addition, in a special election to fill a vacancy, **Steve Spooner** was elected to the Regional District #18 Board of Education. Mr. Spooner will serve until the next Municipal election, which is in November of 2013. Congratulations Steve Spooner and good luck on the BOE.

## ***Appointments for Boards and Commissions***

As we approach the New Year, the Board of Selectmen are preparing to make appointments to the many Boards and Commissions that work so hard to make Old Lyme the community that we love. Many people give of their time to serve the community, and have done so for years. But there are also several vacancies that have not been filled in some time. I am pleased to report that many of our members have already indicated their desire to continue their service, while others have decided to pursue other interests. If you feel you have the time, or an interest in a particular area, why not consider getting involved? You can submit your name and information by going to our website for the form:

<http://tinyurl.com/ce2svqc> If you are not sure how you would like to serve, just give a call to find out what Boards and Commissions have vacancies. Annual appointments are approved at the Board of Selectmen meeting on the third Monday in January.

Thank you to all Board and Commission members who have served and to those who continue to serve. Old Lyme is a better community because of you!

## ***Tree Lighting December 7<sup>th</sup>***

This Friday at 5:00 PM, we will have our annual tree lighting ceremony at the Town Hall. This is the first time that it will take place on Lyme Street, and we are delighted to host the event. Music will be provided by the Middle School Band of about 60 students, and the Select Singers from the High School. Hot chocolate & cookies will be served in the Meeting Hall. Sponsored by the Lyme-Old Lyme Chamber of Commerce, this promises to be a fun occasion, so please come out and join us as we kick off the Holiday Season with light. The following day, December 8<sup>th</sup>, the Chamber's 2<sup>nd</sup> **Annual Light Up Old Lyme** event takes place. Come out to enjoy beautiful Lyme Street (& Halls Road!) and support local businesses & non-profit organizations. Want more information? Visit the Chamber website at <http://visitoldlyme.com/events/light-up-old-lyme/>

*On behalf of the Board of Selectmen and our entire Town Staff, I wish everyone a Happy and safe Holiday Season. Please note that Town Hall will close at 2 PM on Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>*