

Town Topics

A municipal newsletter for the Wilmington community

From the Manager's Desk



In the words of singer-songwriter Bob Dylan "The times they are a-changin'." After 22 years of distinguished service as Wilmington's Town Manager, Mike Caira retired at the end of September. He brought a level of energy and commitment to the Town of Wilmington that is unrivaled. His budgetary acumen, fiscal discipline and his leadership ability to elicit the support of department heads and staff has resulted in Wilmington's enviable position of achieving and maintaining a AA+ bond rating from Standard and Poors' Rating Services. In October the state Department of Revenue announced that Wilmington's available fund balance, its' financial reserves, had reached \$11,255,673 the highest level of reserves in the town's history. The fact that the town is in such a strong financial position during the worst economic period since the Great Depression makes this achievement even more remarkable.

The Greek orator and statesman Pericles commented: "What you leave behind is not engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." Mike's leadership in ensuring that departments had the resources to provide residents with the services they need and deserve and his personal interactions with children and adults alike have touched many lives forever. Best wishes to Mike and his wife Jane for a happy and healthy retirement.

After 20 years as Wilmington's principal assessor Skip Moynihan retired in early December. Property owners are always eager to see their property appreciate in value but understandably dread paying more taxes for that property. Skip has assumed the responsibility of establishing fair and equitable property values while at the same time explaining to business and residential taxpayers the rationale behind the increase in property taxes even in the face of declining property values in recent years. He has responded to these questions and challenges with tact and diplomacy. For businesses contemplating a relocation to Wilmington or individuals seeking to start a business in Wilmington, Skip has served as a primary spokesperson for the town. We wish him all the best in his retirement.

Former West Newbury assessor Karen Rassias began her work as Wilmington's principal assessor in early December. Prior to serving in West Newbury Ms. Rassias served as the deputy assessor in Saugus. In addition to being a Certified Massachusetts Accredited Assessor she is a candidate for attaining the International Association of Assessing Officers CAE designation. She has been familiarizing herself with Wilmington's housing stock and commercial and industrial property.



Principal Assessor Karen Rassias and retired assessors Skip Moynihan and Tony Krzeminski

One year ago in *Town Topics* Town Manager Mike Caira reported on the overwhelming vote both at the ballot box and at town meeting for the construction of a new 21st century high school. Unfortunately, due to the efforts of a few individuals,

the construction of that high school has been delayed. An Order of Conditions approved by the Wilmington Conservation Commission in May established specific requirements intended to mitigate impacts to the wetlands due to the high school construction. The initial appeal to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) led to the issuance of a Superseding Order of Conditions (SOC) which made minor modifications to the Conservation Commission's Order of Conditions. The SOC was then the subject of an administrative appeal within the DEP. On November 15, 2012 DEP Commissioner Kenneth Kimmel issued a Final Superseding Order of Conditions which affirmed the initial SOC. An abutter to the property appealed the Commissioner's decision to Superior Court. The date for consideration of this appeal by Superior Court is unknown at this time.

The design of the high school has been completed by the town's architect Dore & Whittier. The Final Order of Conditions from DEP provides the town with a "green light" to proceed with construction of the project. While the appeal to Superior Court does present a measure of risk, town officials and legal counsel believe that the appeal has no merit. Being mindful of the potential consequences of further delay, the town has authorized the publication of bid documents for specific building trades. Bids must be submitted to the town no later than January 18, 2013. The town continues to move deliberately through the legal obstacles that have been raised. Our goal remains to respond to the directive of an overwhelming majority of voters to construct a new high school on the site of the existing high school that will meet the educational needs of students today and into the future.

The Town of Wilmington has once again been recognized by the Massachusetts Municipal Association as an award recipient in the Annual Town Report Contest. For the eighth time in nine years a panel of judges selected Wilmington's town report and calendar for distinguished honors amongst communities with populations of 12,500 or greater. The two documents which are created under the able stewardship of Beverly Dalton, Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager, serve as both a record of activities and achievements over the most recent calendar year and a look ahead to meeting dates of boards and committees and important dates for community events.

Congratulations are extended to Police Chief Michael Begonis and the Wilmington Police Department for achieving "gold" honors which is the highest honors in the Law Enforcement Challenge. This program, which is sponsored by the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau, the National Highway Safety Transportation Bureau and the Mothers Against Drunk Driving, evaluated calendar year 2011 traffic data from participating communities from across the Commonwealth before rating police departments in categories that included driver education, traffic incentive programs and innovative measures to improve vehicular, pedestrian and cycling safety on local roads. The department's philosophy of taking an active role in preventing accidents and injuries makes traveling the streets of Wilmington safer for all.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT HAS MUCH TO OFFER

WINTER NEWSLETTER

Printed copies of the winter newsletter are available at Town Hall, the Buzzell Senior Center and the Wilmington Memorial Library. Information can also be accessed on the town's website at www.wilmingtonma.gov, click on Recreation to access the webpage. Save the link in your "Favorites" so you can access it easily. While there, click on "Subscribe to E-Alerts" to receive informational updates from various town departments. Select Recreation News to receive an e-mail when a new edition of "Recreation Matters" has been posted or for information regarding program updates.

NEW PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Are you ready to try something new? Check out the newest programs for children including Forensic Fun (CSI for kids!) and Chess Wizards to encourage children to play an actual, physical board game. Be sure to check out all the adult programs. We have a variety of fitness options to get you in shape in 2013.

"THE ROOKIES" PLAY BALL!



Register your child (age 5 by April 30, 2013 and Grade 1) for our baseball program called "The Rookies". This program combines traditional T-Ball with a coach-pitch format to prepare children to advance to Little League. This six-week program will run from

April 29 – June 6. Children will have one practice session and one game each week. Cost is \$25 per child. Registration forms will be available on our website and in the office beginning February 4. **Registration deadline is Thursday, March 21.**

WILMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES FIVE NEW OFFICERS

The Wilmington Police Department is glad to welcome Kevin Cavanaugh, Rafael Cruz, Daniel Furbush, Michael Johnson and Julio Quiles to its force. All five officers have completed their academy training at the Lowell Police Academy and will complete their field training in January.



Officers Julio Quiles, Rafael Cruz, Kevin Cavanaugh, Chief Michael Begonis, Officers Daniel Furbush and Michael Johnson

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION - TOWN MEETING

Nomination papers are available in the Town Clerk's Office for the Annual Town Election to be held Saturday, April 27, 2013. Interested residents may file nomination papers for the following offices: Board of Selectmen (2 positions); School Committee (3 positions); Housing Authority and Regional Vocational School Committee.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2013 beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the high school gymnasium. Petitioned articles are due in the Town Clerk's office by 4:30 p.m., Friday, February 1, 2013. **The last day to register to vote for the Town Election and Annual Town Meeting is Friday, April 5, 2013.**

The 2013 Annual Census will be mailed to all households in January. Residents are asked to complete and return the census form as soon as possible. Please call the Town Clerk's Office, 978-658-2030, if you do not receive a census form by the end of January.

YENTILE FARM DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

The Yentile Farm Development Committee has launched an effort to gather input from the community at-large for the new recreational area to be developed at the recently purchased Yentile Farm property.

The Committee has launched an online survey available through the Town's website, Wilmington Public Library's website and Wilmington Public School Department's website. Paper copies are also available in Town Hall and the Library. The survey consists of eight questions and asks about desired activities, concerns and other input that will be used to inform the Committee's recommendations. Additionally, the Wilmington School Department is working on a plan to gather input from elementary school children.

The former Yentile Farm property provides an opportunity to expand the Town of Wilmington's recreational space through the development of a multi-purpose recreational area. This survey seeks to provide Wilmington residents with an opportunity to express ideas and identify recreational needs which will ultimately shape the use of this property.

Visit www.town.wilmington.ma.us/survey to participate. For questions about the Committee and its efforts please contact the Town Manager's Office at 978-658-3311 or via email at kamaral@town.wilmington.ma.us.

A MESSAGE FROM THE WATER DEPARTMENT



As the climate moves toward colder weather, it is time to review items around your home that need to be protected from freezing. Most notably, are your water pipes and meter. Freeze-ups typically occur in the basement due to not properly preparing for the winter months ahead. The cellar should be weather tight by securing windows and doors, filling gaps with expandable foam insulation and wrapping vulnerable pipes with pipe insulation. These items are inexpensive and available at hardware or home improvement stores. Keeping air infiltration away from pipes and your meter will significantly reduce the chance of confronting costly plumbing and meter repairs. Pipe bursts can result in property damage, temporary loss of water and a high water bill.

A few minutes of prevention this fall can save you from real troubles when the weather turns bitter cold. Please take a moment to check these items and to winterize your sill cocks, garden hoses and sprinkler systems.

The Water Department requests that residents help keep fire hydrants accessible by not plowing or snow blowing onto the hydrant. If able, please clear the area around the hydrant to enable fire crews to quickly connect to a hydrant when it is needed in your neighborhood.

SHARPS RETURN KIOSK AT PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

The Wilmington Police Department has received a Sharps Return Kiosk which is located in the lobby of the Public Safety Building. New and used needles **must** be in an approved Sharps container. EPI-PENS **are not** accepted. This container was made possible by a grant awarded to the Middlesex District Attorney's office.

In addition, Residents may discard unused or unwanted prescriptions/medications in the drug collection kiosk at any time. Residents may do this anonymously and do not have to check in at the front desk. Liquids **are not** accepted in this unit.

LIBRARY WINTER EVENTS TECHNOLOGY, MONEY AND CHOCOLATE!

Looking for something to do during the cold winter months? Library events are educational, entertaining and FREE thanks to the generous support of the Friends of the Library.

Registration begins 30 days prior to the event at www.wilmlibrary.org or by calling 978-694-2099 (Adult) or 978-694-2098 (Children/Teen). Sign up for the e-mail newsletter or for RSS feeds to keep up with upcoming events at the library.

One-on-One Tech Help

Mondays, 10 - 11 a.m., Thursdays, 7 - 8 p.m.

Did you get an iPad or a Kindle for Christmas and would like to learn the basics of how it works? The library now offers one-hour tech help sessions. Call the library at 978-658-2967 to book one of the time slots above. Library staff can also assist you with email, internet research, downloading music, ebooks etc. Bring your personal device or use the library's computers. Please book only one session at a time.

MONEY MATTERS SERIES

Financial Fire Drill - Thursday, January 10, 7 p.m.

Jeanne Gibson Sullivan, founder of Financially in Tune, will talk about how to deal with loss of income due to job loss or poor investments and how to manage investments during uncertain market conditions.



**7 Secrets to a Stronger Financial Future
Thursday, January 17, 7 p.m.**

Martin R. Gredinger CPA, CFP will share some financial planning tips and ideas that everyone can put to use.

Money Matters - Raising Financially Responsible Children - Tuesday, January 22, 7 p.m.

Learn the importance of raising financially responsible children and get some helpful tips on ways to teach children about money.

**Money Matters - Looking at the Big Picture
Thursday, January 24, 7 p.m.**

Margo Ranger, Senior Portfolio Manager at PW Global, will describe the investment climate that forms the determinative backdrop for financial markets, risk analysis and decision-making.

EVERYTHING CHOCOLATE

From Tree to Truffle

Thursday, February 7, 7 p.m.

Valerie Conyngham, owner of *vianne chocolat*, will take a look at the chocolate growing process and how *vianne chocolat* turns the "Fruit of the Gods" into the delicate chocolate confections we all adore.

Week of February 11 - 16

Chocolate samples available all week at the first floor desk!

Brownie Bake-off - Tuesday, February 19, 7 p.m.

Do you have a favorite brownie recipe? If so, enter and have a little fun. The brownies will be judged by those who know best - teens! Bake-off entries are open to individuals and families. Come to the judging and enjoy the brownies afterward. Applications to enter will be available at the library and on the website **January 19**.

Cooking with Chocolate (limit 35) (age 16+)

Thursday, February 28, 7 p.m.

Join chef/instructor Liz Barbour as she uses chocolate as the main ingredient in recipes that are not just for dessert. Enjoy a cooking demonstration of two delicious recipes and enjoy sampling the dishes.

FEBRUARY CHOCOLATE VACATION WEEK EVENTS

Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory

February 19, 10 a.m.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

February 21, 10 a.m.



Chocolate Olympics - February 20, 3 p.m.

Play lots of chocolate themed games, and eat some yummy chocolate along the way.

Chocolate Cake in a Mug - February 22, 3 p.m.

Make a delicious cake in a mug! Bring a microwavable coffee mug. Ages 6+

Teen Chocolate-Covered Workshop

Wednesday, February 13, 3 p.m.

Experiment with melted chocolate, caramel, crushed candies and more and make your own gourmet Valentine treats.

Teens Judge Brownies - Tuesday, February 19, 7 p.m.

The town-wide Brownie Bake-Off needs teen judges. Contact Brandy Danner, Teen Services Librarian, by February 15 to volunteer for this delicious job!

Friends of the Library Chocolate Gift Basket

The Friends of the Library will have a chocolate themed gift basket (with a \$100 Williams- Sonoma gift card) at the main desk on the first floor during the month of February. You can buy tickets at \$2 each/3 for \$5. All proceeds benefit the library.

FREE INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

The Department of Elderly Services will once again provide free income tax assistance through the IRS sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. Wilmington residents ages 60 and older may schedule an appointment by calling the Buzzell Senior Center at 978-657-7595. The program begins Wednesday, February 6, 2013 and continues every Wednesday through April 10, 2013 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Wilmington Town Hall. All tax returns are prepared with computer accuracy and are electronically filed for rapid refunds. Clients should bring the following documents to their appointment:

- * Current year's tax information and last year's tax return
- * W-2 forms
- * Social Security & pension information
- * Tax forms sent by any and all financial institutions
- * Property tax & water bills
- * Health Insurance card - 2 cards for married taxpayers

Anyone in need of transportation should make arrangements when scheduling their appointment.

FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Community Teamwork, Inc. Fuel Assistance Program is available to applicants through April 2013. Wilmington residents 60 years or older in need of fuel assistance should contact the Office of the Director of Elderly Services at 978-657-7595. Wilmington residents who applied last year and are receiving renewal applications in the mail may also call for an appointment. Residents under the age of 60 should contact the Veterans' Affairs office in Billerica at 978-671-0968. The income guidelines are as follows:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Gross Income</u>
1	\$31,271
2	\$40,893
3	\$50,515
4	\$60,137
5	\$69,759
6	\$79,381

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK-UP

The Department of Public Works will be collecting Christmas trees at curbside beginning January 2, 2013. Residents should remove all decorations and plastic wrapping from their tree and place it curbside on their regular trash pick-up day. It is anticipated that the collection will take approximately two weeks. Please note that the pick-up may be delayed by weather and other work demands on the DPW.



The Christmas trees collected by the Town will be recycled into mulch. The mulch will be made available to residents in the spring at the Recycling Center, and will also be used on Town projects. Residents are advised that if they miss this DPW curbside collection, they may put their Christmas trees out with their regular trash.

For details on public works services, please refer to the "Public Works" link on the Town's website at www.town.wilmington.ma.us or call the Department of Public Works at 978-658-4481.

DOG REGISTRATION/RABIES CLINIC



The 2013 dog tags are now available. You may register your dog at the Town Clerk's office Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or by mail. If by mail, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope, a check for \$10.00 if your dog is neutered/spayed, \$15.00 if not, and a copy of the dog's most recent rabies certificate to: Town Clerk, 121 Glen Road, Wilmington, MA 01887.

The Wilmington Board of Health Annual Rabies Clinic will be held on Saturday, April 6, 2013 from Noon to 2 p.m. at the Public Buildings Department, 30 Church Street. Wilmington residents only. Dogs must be on a leash and cats in a carrier. Cost: \$10.00 per animal.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JAN 2 -	- CURBSIDE COLLECTION OF CHRISTMAS TREES	
JAN 11		
JAN 6	- HARNDEN TAVERN OPEN HOUSE	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
FEB 1	- LAST DAY TO SUBMIT PETITIONED WARRANT ARTICLES FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING	
FEB 3	- HARNDEN TAVERN OPEN HOUSE	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
FEB 4	- T-BALL "ROOKIES" REGISTRATION BEGINS	Grades K-1
MAR 3	- HARNDEN TAVERN OPEN HOUSE	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
MAR 8	- NOMINATION PAPERS DUE FOR TOWN ELECTION	
MAR 19	- FINANCE COMMITTEE/PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW TOWN MEETING ARTICLES	Town Hall Auditorium 7 p.m.
MAR 21	- T-BALL "ROOKIES" REGISTRATION DEADLINE	
MAR 30	- EASTER EGG HUNT	Town Common 2 p.m.
APR 5	- LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE - TOWN ELECTION/TOWN MEETING	Until 8 p.m.
APR 6	- RABIES CLINIC	Public Buildings Dept. Noon - 2 p.m.

NEWS FROM THE TOWN MUSEUM

The Museum will be open this winter as follows:

- **Sunday Open House:** January 6, February 3, March 3 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Free tours of the Wilmington Town Museum.
- The Museum is also open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- By appointment – Please do not hesitate to contact the Museum to schedule an appointment at the convenience of you or your group.
- **SPECIAL SCHOOL VACATION HOURS: Tuesday, February 19, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** The Museum will be closed on Thursday, February 21, 2013.

Don't forget – you can buy postcards of historic Wilmington sites at the Town Museum for 25 cents! Also historical books and commemorative tote bags are available for purchase.

For more information or to schedule a tour please call 978-658-5475 or e-mail htavern@town.wilmington.ma.us. Or visit us on the web at

http://www.town.wilmington.ma.us/Pages/WilmingtonMA_BComm/Historical/index

DEPARTMENT



TELEPHONE

Accountant	694-2029
Animal Control	658-5071
Appeals Board	658-4531
Arts Center	657-3887
Assessor	658-3675
Building Inspector	658-4531
Cemetery	658-3901
Collector of Taxes	658-3531
Elderly Services	657-7595
Engineer	658-4499
Fire	(Business) 658-3346 (Emergency) 9-1-1
Fire Prevention	694-2006
Harnden Tavern Museum	658-5475
Health	658-4298
Housing Authority	658-8531
Library	658-2967
Nurse	658-4298
Planning/Conservation	658-8238
Plumbing Inspector	658-4531
Police	(Business) 658-5071 (Emergency) 9-1-1 (TDD) 657-8368
Public Buildings	658-3017
Public Works	658-4481
Recreation	658-4270
School	694-6000
Selectmen	658-3311
Town Clerk	658-2030
Town Manager	658-3311 (TDD) 694-1417
Treasurer	658-3531
Veteran's Agent	694-2040
Water & Sewer	658-4711 (Billing) 658-3116

This newsletter can be made available in an alternative format. Contact {978} 658-3311 or TTY {978} 694-1417