

# Haddam Killingworth News

AN INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER COVERING HADDAM, HIGGANUM, HADDAM NECK AND KILLINGWORTH

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December 3, 2020

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Free weekly



Photo by John & Yvette Minervino.

## HKHS Boys Shoreline Champs; Girls place 2nd

By Matt Diglio, Coach

The Haddam Killingworth High School Cross Country Boys and Girls both finished the dual meet season with a 6-0 record. The boys team has not lost a dual meet in 7 consecutive years with an overall record of 92-0 while the girls xc team has not lost a dual meet in 6 years with an overall record of 64-0.

At the Shoreline Championships the boys were led by senior Matthew Jennings who won the race for the 2nd consecutive year to help lead the team to their 7th straight Shoreline title.

Joining Jennings as a First team All Conference runner was junior Caleb Freeman who placed 5th overall. Junior Greyson Merola placed 11th overall and sophomore Jack Insalaco finished in 13th as they both earned 2nd Team All Conference accolades.

The girls team, running without their #1 runner senior captain Meara Bodak who was out with an injury, placed 2nd overall as a team losing a tight race to East Hampton by a score of 30-36. They were led by sophomore Isabelle Bernardino who was runner up in a time of 21:28 to earn First Team All Conference honors. She was joined on the first team by junior Ava DiMatteo who placed 8th in 22:15. Senior captain Kathy Melgar placed 11th, junior Brianna Minervino placed 12th, freshman Sydney Adelberg 14th and junior Charlotte Selmer 19th all earned Second Team All Conference accolades by their top 20 finish.

The captains for the boys team were Ethan Chester, Matthew Jennings and Sean Rutledge. The girls captains were Meara Bodak, Gabby Flaherty and Kathy Melgar.

## Youth design new billboard to increase awareness

By Kathy Brown

You may have seen the new billboard on Route 154 if you drive south from exit 10: "When the glass shatters your buzz will not matter" along with a picture of a broken windshield.

The idea for the billboard was hatched by members of Ignite, a youth coalition of Haddam Killingworth Youth & Family Services. "The idea of creating a billboard was brainstormed by our group at one of our meetings when we were asking ourselves how we can get a message out in a big way," explained Hannah Laird-Hoover. "I believe the slogan itself was created by another leadership member, John Bosco, after we divided in teams for a slogan and billboard competition. We pulled elements from both teams' designs and eventually came up with our billboard to raise awareness about driving intoxicated or under the influence. We hope any adult and/or teen passing this message will think twice about driving under any influence and will consider the great consequences for something as harmless seeming as a 'buzz.'"

"The idea was 100% youth driven," explained Laurie Ruderfer, Executive Director, HKYFS. "All I had to do was take those ideas and work with Lamar Company and the billboard grew from that."

The six leaders of Ignite this year are Libby Antonelli, John Bosco, Timothy Carter, Lizzy Celano, Hannah Laird-Hoover, and Mia Rubino, who are

*Continued on Page HK6*



Billboard on Route 154. Photos courtesy of HKYFS.

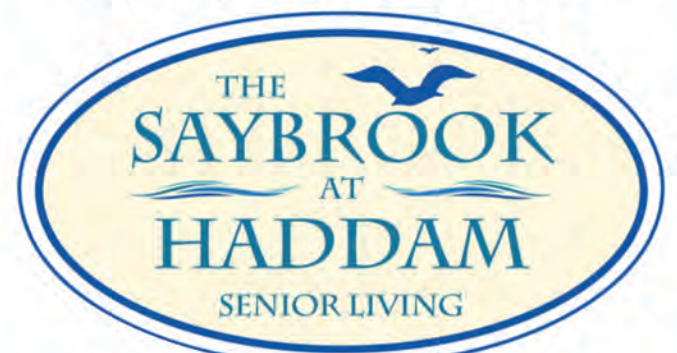
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# Eagle Scout project completed at Jail Hill ball fields

By Philip R. Devlin

HKHS senior, Matthew Pray, of Higganum started playing T-ball at age five and became a Cub Scout at age six. He has been actively involved in both baseball and scouting ever since, so it was a natural fit for him to combine the two activities for his culminating Eagle Scout project. That project came to fruition last Wednesday at the Jail Hill fields in Haddam when Matthew, with the assistance of a work party, displayed the products of his labors: a kiosk with baseball memorabilia and a bulletin board and two replacement benches.

Former Haddam Little League President Pete Christopher had suggested the project to Matthew about three years ago. Covered by plexiglass, the kiosk contains the first home plate ever used at the field in 2002 as well as a Little League plaque and a name plate with Matthew's name on it. The back side of the kiosk has a cork board display area for announcements.

Matthew had to fill out an Eagle Project Proposal form which had to be approved by an Eagle Scout coordi-



Photos by Devlin.

nator, a scoutmaster, the Connecticut Rivers Council Scouting Council coordinator, and the Haddam Little League. Both Jason Waterbury, the current Little League president, and Pete Christopher, the former league president, stayed in constant touch with Matthew throughout the project. Matthew cited Mr. Christopher as being his most important influence on the project.

A work party of about twelve cur-

rent scouts, his dad, Scott, and his brother, Jackson, helped Matthew in the final assembly phase last Wednesday, November 11th. Ralph Rand, longtime head of the Little League umpires for Haddam, and Matthew's high school coach Mark Brookes, who was a member of the very first Haddam Little League team back in 1963, were present to congratulate Matthew upon the completion of his project. All agreed



that Matthew's project definitely enhances the appeal of the local ball fields. Congratulations, Matthew, on a job well done!

## SPORTS

### CIAC postpones winter sports to January 2021

By Editorial Staff

The CIAC (Connecticut interscholastic Athletic Conference) decided this morning that all high school winter sports will be postponed until Jan.19, 2021.

Winter sports are basketball, gymnastics, ice hockey, indoor track, swimming, wrestling, and Cheer.

"CIAC Interscholastic athletics are an education-based experience that

maintains in-person learning and the health and safety of our school communities as our top priority," said Glenn Lungarini, Executive Director, CAS-CIAC, which was posted on the CIAC website. "[This] action supports our member schools while they continue manage rising COVID numbers within their communities and experience widespread movements to distance learning."

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**COMMON INJURIES CAUSED BY CAR ACCIDENTS**

By Attorney AnnMarie Cienava Rocco

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# HADDAM-KILLINGWORTH TOWN & COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please visit [www.haddam.org](http://www.haddam.org), [www.townofkillingworth.com](http://www.townofkillingworth.com) or [hk-now.com](http://hk-now.com) for the most current information, including cancellations, location changes, time changes.

## Thursday, December 3

Parmelee Farm Comm. Meeting – at Parmelee Farm, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Haddam P&Z Meeting (remote access only) 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

## Friday, December 4

“Dashing Through Downtown” – Holiday Car Parade Middletown, 6:15 p.m.

## KILLINGWORTH

# KHS Christmas Fair scheduled for Dec. 5 now cancelled

By Claudette Lagasse

The Killingworth Historical Society Christmas Fair scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Parmelee Farm has been cancelled due to the pandemic. We will miss all our shoppers and loyal supporters, but safety remains our priority.

The raffle of the Parmelee Farmhouse painting by local artist Sandy Smith will take place as scheduled on Dec. 5 at 3:00 p.m. at the Parmelee Farm. The winner need not be present. Raffle tickets will be available at the Black Rock Schoolhouse on Route 81 & Recycle Way on Dec. 5 from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. or contact a Board member. Tickets are \$5.00 each or three for \$10.00. Proceeds benefit the Historical Society's ongoing preservation projects. Our website address: [killingworthhistorical.org](http://killingworthhistorical.org) and we're on [facebook.com/KillingworthHistoricalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/KillingworthHistoricalSociety)

Decorate your vehicle and join in our parade as we dash through downtown Middletown spreading holiday magic to all that pass! The holiday parade will dash off from Middletown High School. Register your car today to participate in this exciting event! <https://business.middlesexchamber.com/events/details/2020-holiday-vehicle-parade-registration-20101>

In the case of inclement weather, the event will be postponed to Saturday, Dec. 5. For more information on “Dashing Through Downtown” please visit [www.holidayonmain.com](http://www.holidayonmain.com) or contact Haley Stafford at [haley@middlesexchamber.com](mailto:haley@middlesexchamber.com).

HK Players present: “It’s Virtually a Murder Mystery,” 7:00-9:00 p.m.

The HK Players are proud to invite the RSD17 community to its fall play, “It’s Virtually a Murder Mystery.” It is a fully virtual production. Tickets are on sale using this link:

<https://www.onthestage.com/show/haddam-killingworth-high-school/its-virtually-a-murder-mystery-72530> Tickets are \$10 each. If you will be watching the show with more than 1 person, please consider purchasing a \$20 family ticket. Donations are also gladly accepted!

## Saturday, December 5

HK Players present: “It’s Virtually a Murder Mystery,” 7:00 p.m.

Holiday Pop-Up Vendor Fair – MCCC 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Middletown, Conn. Central Business Bureau Chairwoman Pamela Steele, and Event Chairman Al Santostefano of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce invites the community and potential vendors to join a Holiday Pop-Up Vendor Fair. The vendor fair will follow Holiday on Main Street weather condition guidelines, meaning that the event will only be cancelled in the case of heavy rain or snow.

Christmas in the Country – Higganum HES, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Confirmed vendors: Oh fudge. Bittersweet Farm, Auntie Arwen’s Spices, Vinyl Delites

CShoreSal. Violet’s Corner, StoreMeasure, Twice-Hogan’s, HopeNE, AlpacaHandmade in Madison. Photography by Roger Charbonneau 24 Peace Food/Drinks, The Rolling Tomato (pizza etc.) Mamoun’s Falafel Truck, Rogue Coffee Co. Hot Tea from Bittersweet Farm

Super Saturday Storytime – Killingworth Library, 10:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Weekly family fun for kids of all ages! While the library remains closed, we will now be holding our Saturday Storytimes on our new YouTube channel! <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-FNxntCX-n5xyj4ltJXj1XA/videos>

## Monday, December 7

Killingworth Charter Revision Comm. Mtg. (remote access only), 7:00-9:00 p.m.

## Tuesday, December 8

Killingworth BOF Meeting (remote access only), 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Killingworth Library Zoom Tuesday Book Discussion. Join us as we discuss *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richards. This group will be meeting via Zoom. If you are interested in joining the group, please email the library at [mail@killingworthlibrary.org](mailto:mail@killingworthlibrary.org). Extra copies will be available at the circulation desk.

## Wednesday, December 9

Free Covid-19 testing – Middletown 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Farm Hill Elementary, 390 Ridge Road, Middletown, Conn.

Haddam EDC Meeting (remote access only), 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Killingworth Public Health Agency Meeting (remote access only), 7:00-9:00 p.m.

HK Recreation Authority Meeting (remote access only), 7:30-9:30 p.m.

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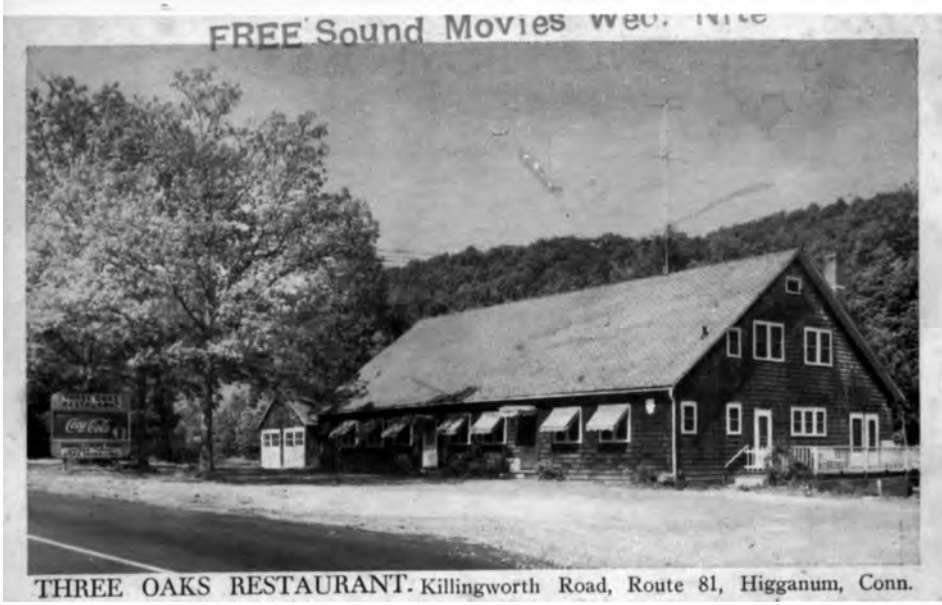
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## HADDAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY



THREE OAKS RESTAURANT. Killingworth Road, Route 81, Higganum, Conn.

Photos courtesy of Haddam Historical Society.

## On the Road with Haddam Historical Society: Three Oaks Restaurant

By Elizabeth Hart Malloy, Executive Director, Haddam Historical Society

The Three Oaks Restaurant, located on Killingworth Road, was established in the mid-1940s by Frank Hrbek who came to Higganum from New York City. Residents today know the property as Three Oaks Plaza office complex.

The restaurant offered dining for lunch and dinners and entertainment including modern and old fashion dancing, polish hops, waltzes and floor shows. It was a popular location for parties, weddings and banquets. The Hrbek Family who operated the restaurant in the 1940s through 1960s, included Frank Sr. and his wife, Betty and their son Frank Jr. and his wife Helen.

For many years the Haddam Volun-



teer Fire Department held their annual Ball at the restaurant to raise funds for the organization. The Higganum baseball team, "Higgies" would hold banquets and fundraisers in order to buy new uniforms. In the early years there were even boxing and wrestling exhibitions. Music was provided by a variety of entertainers including the Karauczyk Orchestra.

The building was destroyed by fire in 1973 and rebuilt as the Four

*Continued on Page HK9*

## HADDAM COMMUNITY

## Haddam Land Trust unveils new preserve, honors Planeta family's generosity

By Editorial Staff

On Saturday, Nov. 22, members of the Haddam Land Trust Board of Directors, as well as relatives of Nancy L. Planeta, held a dedication ceremony.

The dedication was a chance to install a preserve sign, as well as introduce

their "newest preserve, honor the generosity of the donors, and reflect on the realization of Ms. Planeta's wish to have her land conserved," said the notice to the public about the dedication.

The preserve of 19 acres is located on High Street.



Planeta relative, Linda DeManche, unveiling the Preserve sign.

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## Youth group designs billboard

*Continued from page HK1*

all seniors. There are 43 youth signed up for Ignite, though about 25 attend meetings.

The billboard isn't the only project the group has undertaken. Since July 2020, they spearheaded the Back to School Supply Drive Bake Sale, created a club to focus on mental health awareness called MIND, participated in the Farmers Market to spread the word about suicide awareness and prevention, attended QPR training (17 youth, along with 6 adults attended), and hosted a presentation by a former substance user and the Haddam Ambulance.

"In 2015, HKYFS was awarded a grant opportunity through the CT State of CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)," explained Laurie. "The CT Strategic Prevention Coalitions grant (CSC) gave us the opportunity to bring groups of community leaders, students and parents, law enforcement and key stakeholders from every sector in the community to collaboratively address issues affecting young people in our communities. At that time there was concern about the number of under-age youths known to be using alcohol (and other substances) as well as concerns about mental health issues affecting youth and adult community members. Six years later those issues continue to be at the forefront of the coalitions' work."

"In addition to paying for a full time prevention coordinator, the grants required broad community involvement, identification and focus on the issues sur-

rounding youth access to and use of alcohol and other drugs, the underlying factors that explained why problems exist and ways of thinking strategically about how to address the issue," said Laurie. "Under the HKYFS umbrella, they have been at the forefront of bringing youth and adults together to promote healthy community. Ignite, created by Cristal DiPietro [in 2016] and significantly expanded by former Prevention Coordinator for HKYFS, Lindsey Lehet, has been blazing trails ever since. Our new coordinator, Francesca (Franny) LaFountain, is looking forward to working with Ignite and picking up where Lindsey left off."

"Igniting passion and change for a better community was the slogan when we started," said Cristal. "A group of kids [met] with Congressman Courtney to talk about the things that affected them most. After that meeting I knew we had a group of kids strong enough to create a youth coalition."

Cristal believed that young people should be given "the voice and opportunity to create change through prevention and leadership," so not only did they create the youth coalition Ignite, but also invited two of those teens to sit on the adult coalition. "These kids felt empowered and over the course of the time I was there, they truly forged through as a group of young people who shared their opinions and concerns regarding prevention surrounding drugs and alcohol.



Ignite members hard at work.

Those kids went on to do amazing things."

Laurie explained that meetings for this incredible group are held twice a month, on Thursday evenings. Anyone high school age can join. The focus of the group has been addressing issues that include youth alcohol abuse, access to alcohol and other

substances, mental health awareness and challenges, vaping and its risks, the development of positive relationships for youth. The adult coalition (Healthy Communities-Healthy Kids) co-chaired by Michele Ouellette and Rich Mulhall, will be working closely with Ignite this year.

"I was eager to join," said Elizabeth Celano. "With the suffering in surrounding communities regarding mental health, we've focused much of our fundraising towards helping mental health awareness. We hope to fundraise through drive-in movies, bake sales, and other socially distant sales. With this money we plan to get special speakers at meetings and send members to leadership conferences."

"[I] joined Ignite the summer before my freshman year and have attended almost every meeting since," said Hannah. "I initially joined because my mom was on the adult coalition and recommended it. However, after my first few meetings, I quickly developed a passion for advocacy, awareness, and prevention."

Ignite members share their ideas and opinions about what is important to them and their focus for 2020/2021:

*youth access to and use of alcohol and other drugs  
drugged driving  
mental health issues facing young people  
awareness of and suicide prevention*

"Through Ignite I personally feel we are not only trying to raise awareness for the very prevalent drug and alcohol use within our community, but to establish an open and safe environment where youth feel accepted and that their voices are valued and heard," explained Hannah.

With this billboard "we hope to spread awareness about the issue as well as remind people in the moment to make the right choice," said Elizabeth. "It could help people, specifically adults, understand how the youth in their community feel."

"Their passion is extraordinary," said Laurie. "Of all the youth coalitions across the State, ours is one of the most active."

## Haddam Killingworth News

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Photo courtesy of Genie Dethloff.

## Santa's Mailbox is coming to Killingworth!

By Genie Dethloff

Santa's mailbox will be at the Killingworth Library. There will be a mailbox outside on the table by the front door during their curbside operating hours. Letters can also be "Mailed" when the library is closed by dropping them in the book return. "Mailed" letters should be sent between Nov. 27-Dec. 16 and addressed to Santa. Blank letters to Santa will be available outside the library, and online on the [kwoct.org/what-we-do](http://kwoct.org/what-we-do) page. Please include the child's full name and full address so that Santa and his elves can send a response letter with the help of the Killingworth Women's Organization. After December 16th, Santa cannot guarantee a reply since it is such a busy time at the North Pole. For more info email [Santaletterskwo@gmail.com](mailto:Santaletterskwo@gmail.com). Happy Holidays!

## Magic of Middletown presents "Spirit of the Season, Magical Light Tour"

By Sierra Lopez, Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce

Central Business Bureau Chairwoman Pamela Steele and Event Chairman Al Santostefano of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce invites the community to decorate their homes for the holidays to spread magic and joy!

As families look to venture out in a safe and socially distant way this holiday season they can visit [www.holidayonmain.com](http://www.holidayonmain.com) for a brand-new light show experience. From the safety of their personal vehicles, families will drive through Middletown to experience the "Spirit of the Season, Magical Light Tour" from Dec. 1, 2020 – Jan. 11, 2021.

Event Chairman Al Santostefano noted, "A decorated house or business gets everyone in "The Holiday Spirit!"

The Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce and The City of Middletown are excited to share the

"Spirit of the Season, Magical Light Tour" and encourage all residents to participate.

This event will not only make Middletown more magical this holiday season but will provide a holiday outing to brighten everyone's spirits during these uncertain times.

Middlesex Chamber President Larry McHugh noted, "I would like to encourage all Middletown homes and businesses to get involved in this safe and socially distant light show experience. Now more than ever during this holiday season, it's so important to lift everyone's spirits as we navigate through the pandemic." Central Business Bureau Chairwoman Pamela Steele added, "People love seeing the houses decorated for the holiday season. Let's spread that magic throughout the city!"

If you would like to participate in our listing of decorated homes, please email, [magicofmiddletown@gmail.com](mailto:magicofmiddletown@gmail.com)

### KILLINGWORTH COMMUNITY

## The Helping Hands Food Pantry providing food for Killingworth residents

By Genie Dethloff, Chair of Publicity, Killingworth Women's Organization

Killingworth residents can pick up food curbside at the pantry on Thursdays from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at 242 Route 81 (on the circle). Food is available for weekly

pickup, if needed.

To place an order or to let the pantry know ahead of time that you are coming, call 860 663-1765 ext. 401 or email [helpinghands@kwoct.org](mailto:helpinghands@kwoct.org). Order forms are available outside the pantry and online at the [kwoct.org/what-we-do](http://kwoct.org/what-we-do) page. Orders will consist of a pre-packed selection of nonperishable food staples, extras as available – portioned to fit your household size. Special food requests and special dietary needs will be filled if available; make sure to call or email ahead and let the pantry know your request.

If you can't make the designated hours, food pickup is still available by appointment – leave a phone message or email. Delivery is also available for those who are homebound. All information is confidential. The pantry is manned by volunteers from the Killingworth Women's Organization ([kwoct.org](http://kwoct.org)).



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## OBITUARIES

### Walter Baldyga, formerly of Higganum

According to Legacy.com and The Middletown Press, Walter Baldyga, age 78, formerly of Higganum, passed away on Thursday, Nov. 19.

### Ted Wojack of Haddam

According to Legacy.com and The Hartford Courant, Ted L. Wojack, age 93, of New Britain and Haddam, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 18.

### Rowan Monington of Higganum

According to Legacy.com and The Hartford Courant, Rowan A. Monington, Sr., age 77, of Higganum, passed away on Sunday, Nov. 15.

### Erwin E. Burr, Jr. of Higganum

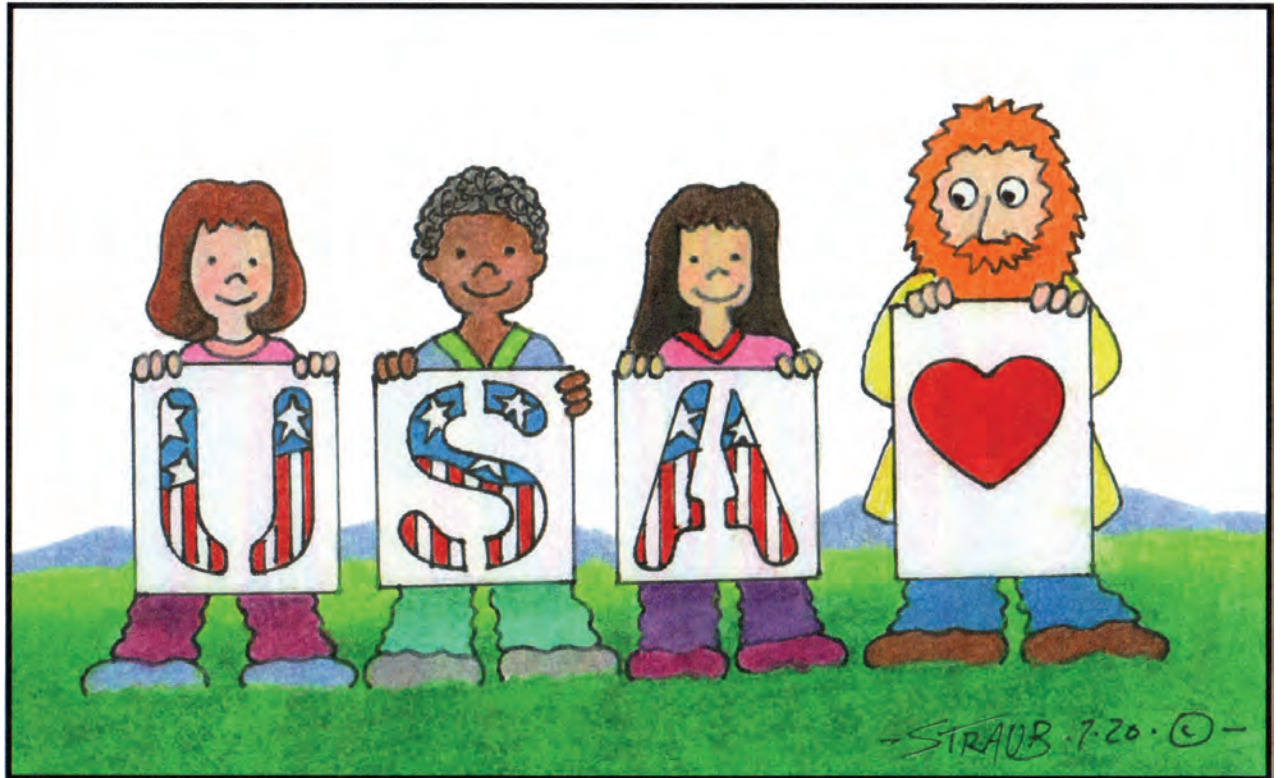
Erwin E. Burr, Jr., 79, of Higganum, husband of Hollis (French) Burr, died Friday Nov. 13, at home with his wife by his side. He was born in Middletown, the son of the late Erwin E. and Augusta (Miorandi) Burr, Sr. A veteran of Vietnam, Erwin served with the US Army aboard a LCU. During his deployment he participated in countless missions up and down the Mekong Delta to the DMZ. Prior to his retirement, he was a general carpenter. Later in his career he specialized in custom carpentry. Erwin was a life member of the Haddam Volunteer Fire Department. He was a Little League Coach for his sons and children of the Haddam community. For many years he was involved with Higganum Rod and Gun Club and Tobacco Valley Flywheelers. Erwin also spent many hours volunteering at Burr District Cemetery. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his sons, Jason Burr and his wife Lisa, grandson, Noah Burr, step grandchildren, Rebecca and Steven; son, Jeremy Burr and his wife, Meredith, granddaughter, Addison; son, Erwin E. Burr, III; sister, Nancy LePard and her husband, Wayne; nephew, Brian LePard; and niece, Cindy Landino; and his Sheltie, Mica. A Celebration of Life will be held when it is safe to gather. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Haddam Veterans' Museum, c/o Rick Annino, 671 Little City Rd., Higganum, CT 06441 or to a charity of the donor's choice. To share memories or express condolences online please visit [www.biegafuneral-home.com](http://www.biegafuneral-home.com)

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our Sympathy Store.

## COMICS

Mac O' Moodus

Roger Straub



Love Letters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE HK5

## Three Oaks Restaurant

Continued from page HK5

Seasons Dinner Theater which operated from 1974-1975 and produced such shows as "Promises, Promises," "Last of the Red Hot Lovers," and the "Odd Couple". Higganum Hall operated for short six months followed by the Pine Brook Dinner Theater in 1976-1977. Camelot Theater opened in 1978 but

also short lived.

The Haddam Historical Society is collecting stories, memories and photographs, including menus and invitations from both the restaurant and dinner theaters for an upcoming online exhibit. If you have something to share please call 860-345-2400 or email us at [contact@haddamhistory.org](mailto:contact@haddamhistory.org)

The Haddam Killingworth News wishes you and yours a safe and happy holiday season.



Gillian R. Kelly, DMD, MSD  
Michael T. Kelly, DMD, MS

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## HOME / UTILITY NEWS

### Eversource to suspend disconnection activities as COVID-19 surges

By Mitch Gross, Eversource

With COVID-19 cases rising in Connecticut and experts forecasting continued increases through the holiday season, Eversource has announced that it will suspend disconnect activities for customer nonpayment.

“With COVID-19 surging and the holidays approaching, suspending electric service disconnections for our customers is a step that will make a big difference during the holiday season,” said Eversource Vice President of Customer Operations Jessica Cain. “At the same time, we remain focused on working individually with our customers to help them reduce their energy use, enroll in one of our flexible payment programs or connect with other options to help. We’ll continue working with our regulators, elected officials and other stakeholders as the pandemic persists to evaluate next

steps for resuming collections activities in an appropriate timeframe.”

Eversource offers payment arrangements that all customers can take advantage of, including a special COVID-19 Payment Program. Customers can pay past-due balances in flexible payment plans for up to 24 months. Once an active payment arrangement has been arranged, the account will be protected from service disconnection for the duration of the payment plan. Enrollment has been extended to Feb. 9, 2021.

Residential customers facing financial or medical hardship may also qualify for extended protection from service disconnection through the winter months, as well as programs to reduce their balance and assistance paying energy or heating bills this winter. More information is available at [Eversource.com/BillHelp](http://Eversource.com/BillHelp) or by calling our Customer Service team at 800-286-2828.

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