

Board of Selectmen

Ruth Epstein, First Selectman

This year has brought several important positive changes to the Town of Kent.

A town meeting in April approved an appropriation of \$3.6 million for a 15,000 square-foot fire house at 28 Maple Street that will be ready for occupancy next summer. The town has secured \$800,000 from two Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants for use toward this project. A hearty salute to all who have worked to make this project a reality.

As of the end of the fiscal year, the town was still waiting for approval from the Department of Environmental Protection for its proposed new transfer station. A \$450,000 STEAP grant will pay for that project.

Town Hall has been spruced up with a new paint job, both inside and out, new carpeting throughout the whole building and a new roof. Those coming to cast their ballots at elections and referenda are finding the long-used lever machines have been replaced by the optical scan. While it's always difficult to say good bye to an old friend, new acquaintances can become just as loyal and trustworthy.

Through a Small Cities Block Grant, Templeton Farms, our housing complex for senior citizens, went through a major renovation. Residents are very pleased with their new surroundings. Another grant provided the bulk of funding for repaving of nearly one mile of Bull's Bridge Road. Still another grant through the Northwest Transit District has allowed for monthly bus trips for seniors. Among the destinations were Elizabeth Park's Rose Garden in Hartford and the Mystic Aquarium.

Negotiations between the Board of Selectmen and Verizon went on during the year regarding erection of a cell tower at the town garage site. If approved, the facility would bring in a yearly rental fee to the town, along with a percentage of the fees charged to other carriers using the site. Our emergency services and highway department would also have a space on the tower.

The Kent Free Market, our food pantry, expanded to a weekly basis in July. It is run on a client-choice basis and served nearly 50 families over the course of the year. A newly formed Housing Resource Study Committee is looking into ways to promote affordable housing, mainly through parcel programs.

The spotlight was focused on Kent in late June for the filming of a segment of "Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2." The event infused some excitement onto Main Street as cameras and actors, including America Ferrera, descended on our town. Several residents who had walk-on parts will be seen on the big screen when the movie is released.

Volunteers continue to enrich Kent through a wide spectrum of organizations. The Kent Community Fund was formed this past year and through private donations has lent a helping hand to many of our residents in their time of need. The annual Kent Film Festival abounded with talent, bringing many visitors to town to enjoy the offerings.

Longtime municipal employee Marion Whynott retired from her job as clerk to both the assessor and land use administrator. She served the town very well during her tenure and we wish her the best in the future.

The changes seen during the year reflect the town's spirit to continually look forward to make Kent better.

Board of Selectman– Voted by the Town for a 2-year term

| <u>Members:</u> | <u>Term Expires</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Ruth Epstein- | 11/2008 |
| Nancy O'Dea-Wyrick | 11/2008 |
| Vincent LaFontan | 11/2008 |