LIONS CLUB CRAFTING

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share how much they enjoy this type of day.

Crafters came with bins, boxes, and totes full of materials for their various craft choice of the day. Among the creative pursuits were a host of intricate paper crafts, from scrapbooking to journaling, lovely knitting projects, cool watercolor paintings, precise diamond dot art pieces, gorgeous cardmaking, and more. Repeatedly, crafters emphasized that they look forward to these days in the months leading up to the event. They pay $50 for a full day, 9:00am-8:00pm, or $30 for a partial day with their choice of hours, and receive a station for their work; three meals, snacks, and drinks; hands-on workshops; and a chance to participate in a host of raffle prizes. The prizes included everything from restaurant gift cards and a homemade blanket to handmade jewelry and a Craft Cart filled with supplies.

"I've met my best friends through crafting," said Sally, a paper crafter from New Jersey who traveled up to attend Crafting Day with her friend Jen from Bethel. They were chatting and bopping along to the bubbly holiday music with all of their materials spread out and their focus lights turned on. Local mom and grown daughters Michele, Emily, and Lindsay sign up for each Crafting Day because it gives them an unhurried, dedicated chance to spend time together. Kirsten joined her friend Janet at Crafting Day, who was ready to pull out any size or color of cardstock for their extremely detailed scrapbooks. Both are at work on projects that have spanned years and the two have traveled as far as New Hampshire and Cape Cod for Crafting Days, so having these days in their own area is a treat. Crafters could take journal-making, diamond art, paper craft, or cardmaking/stamping classes, which were staggered throughout the day. The paper craft class, scheduled for later in the day, was already full as of late morning.

Wendy Williams and Kim Holczinger run the Crafting Day fundraiser twice per year for the Lions. They support the Alzheimer's Association through their spring day and the fall event rotates among local charities and non-profits. The proceeds for this day went to New Fairfield's Historical Society. President of the Historical Society Linda Fox said, "I really appreciate Wendy & Doug Williams and the New Fairfield Lions Club for their support of the New Fairfield Historical Society. Many thanks for their hard work to put on the Crafting Day. Their support helps the Historical Society maintain the Little Red Schoolhouse and the programs it sponsors."

Wendy said, "We welcome the public to come and visit and check out all of the activities and participate in our raffles. The Community Service Club also hosts a Crafting Day during the winter. So among the three events, we give the crafters a few chances to get together with friends for laughs, good food, and time to work on projects and possibly learn something new." Wendy's favorite aspect of the days? "Getting together with old and new friends and sharing talents and lots of fun and laughs." Her husband, Doug, volunteers to cook for the event and was joined by fellow Lion, Joe, in the kitchen where they were whipping up a delicious batch of Joe's homemade mac and cheese, plus a yummy tossed salad, which were sure to please their crafting guests.

Watch for the next New Fairfield Lions Crafting Day in the spring! Kim and Wendy send invitations out to their email list, plus post on social media. For more information, contact Lionscraftingday@gmail.com.

NF BOS

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ous year's surplus for the Medical Fund. The matter will soon go to a Town Meeting.

Though the vote was unanimous, thoughts were mixed among the BOS on the funding, especially the high percentage. First Selectman Ms. Pat Del Monaco expressed, "in the past, historically, we have looked at the surplus as a way to perhaps fund some of the capital needs that we were forced to take out at budget time, and that has always served us well. It prevents us from having to add those items back in the following budget year." Selectman Ms. Khris Hall concurred, saying that policy has tied the BOF's hands, "I wish this weren't quite the size of appropriation that is being moved forward, but I understand that it is being done in accordance with the [BOF] policy, and it's with the policy that I have the disagreement." Selectman Mr. Jon Russo, a former BOF member, said he is "happy to see that this money is going back to the medical fund to reimburse and replenish that fund. It got pretty low there for a while." That said, he said he supports a second look at the rigidness of the policy.

At the same Town Meeting, a proposed vote on an additional appropriation for $83,334 from the General Fund Unreserved to Paramedic Capital to fund the ambulance that was taken out of capital in the last budget cycle is expected. The matter will go to the BOF for the next meeting on November 18. With these funds secured, the Town will apply to the Hinman Trust for a grant to cover a large portion of the balance of what is expected to be a $350,000 total cost. The Town also previously transferred $90,000 to this line from the American Rescue Plan Act funds. They are also seeking to use a portion of the approximately $85,000 remainder in opioid funding. That funding will be calculated based on the percentage of ambulance runs that were the result of an opioid overdose. Del Monaco confirmed of the amount, "I don't know if I'd call it significant, but it could be a helpful sum of money to bring [the need] down a little bit further." There are two ambulances that technically need replacing, but this funding would cover the replacement of the newer of the two, which was described by Russo as a "lemon."

BOS members are in agreement that funding the ambulance is extremely important. Hall pointed out, "when an ambulance is out because of mechanical difficulties, we rely on an ambulance coming up from Danbury to backfill, if there should be more than one call at the same time, which happens. It is a long run from Danbury, so this is something that has to happen, and has to happen as quickly as we can pull together the money for it."

In an effort to dispel misconceptions and rumors about the 8-30g affordable housing application that is wending through Town board/commission approvals, Del Monaco shared a presentation on what affordable housing is, what qualifies a person or family for it, and what the Town's parameters are in denying such applications. While there is public backlash being heard about the project at Coolidge and Hoover off Saw Mill Road, it was reiterated that the matter is truly out of the Town's hands in most respects. Towns with less than 10% affordable housing are subject to extremely tight leeway in denying 8-30g projects, and New Fairfield currently has 1.19% affordable housing. On the flip side, Del Monaco pointed out that 26% of New Fairfield's residents would actually qualify for affordable housing, "within our own community, we do have need for affordable housing." She gave a breakdown of "affordable homes" in Town: of 5,635 total housing units, including single-family homes, there are 67 affordable units. Of the 67 units, 47 qualify as affordable through federal and state low-interest CHFA or USDA loans; 16 are deed-restricted in the set-aside condominiums in The Woods, Dunham Pond, and the Birches, and 4 units qualify through rental tenant assistance.

The Zoning Commission, which is full of new members, was praised for proceeding cautiously in this matter. Hall shared "I think they are aware that if they decide outside of the parameters of what our State statutes allow, they could cost New Fairfield a whole lot of legal expenses that, in the end, will not be productive," pointing out that Newtown lost a case on denying a project outside of purview in the week before this meeting.

The BOS approved one hire with their Personnel Report, Mr. Kavohn Hadjisoffi, who will take on the position of part-time animal control officer in the Animal Control Department. Hall said, "We went down a little bit of a blind alley before, and I am eager to have help for our full-time animal control officer coming soon." Del Monaco agreed, adding "Kavohn was an excellent candidate for the job. I think he is going to fit in well and look forward to him starting."

There was a brief discussion about intradepartmental transfers, especially the transfer of $13,500 from Public Works Road Repair to Public Works Contracted Services to cover the cost of the Annex's cleaning by Hat City Cleaners. Given that the Board of Education previously paid for the daily cleaning, the BOS now needs to absorb the fee of a little over $1,000 per month.

In discussing their future agendas, the BOS agreed to follow up on the environmental impacts of rodenticide that was brought to their attention by Conservation Inlands/Wetlands Chair Ms. Chris McCartney a couple of months ago. They will also learn more about the Planning Commission's survey on how best to use the lot at 302 Ball Pond Road, which will also house the school's bus lot. Planning member Mr. Keith Landa shared that there were several hundred responses to the survey so far, which will remain open for a couple more weeks.

Del Monaco read a proclamation to celebrate 100-year-old resident Ms. Anne Girolami, who enjoyed a special birthday party at the New Fairfield Senior Center. Girolami was praised as an active and beloved member of the Senior Center who enthusiastically participates in "games, discussions, and educational programs, inspiring others to remain engaged, active, and connected." She was also noted to be a proud member of the winning Cornhole Ninjas Team.

The next regular New Fairfield Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24, 7:00pm.

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